# ALDOUS HUXLEY'S
# STORIES, ESSAYS, & POEMS

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# FOREWORD

I RECEIVED a letter not long ago from a young man at an American university who wanted to know—and he was circularizing the entire literary world in order to discover—why writers wrote. Why he himself wrote to writers was explained in the opening paragraphs of his letter: he had to compose a thesis on the modern novel and he expected that their answers to his question would cast some new and revealing light upon the subject. Perhaps he will get his answers; but I doubt whether he will find them quite so illuminating as he anticipates. People write for one or more of several very simple reasons. They write because they like writing, because they delight in the practice of a complicated and difficult art. They write because they have to earn their living and because writing supplies them with an income and, along with an income, a certain notoriety which some of them greatly enjoy. They write because they find that the process helps them to clarify their own thoughts and feelings. And, finally, they write because they want to influence their readers to think and act in ways which they regard as desirable.

Not all these motives are equally strong in every case. There are some writers for whom the income is more important than the art; others for whom propaganda is more important than either; yet others who feel no need to clarify their thoughts and feelings, for the simple reason that they are quite sure that they know what 's what. What light do such facts project upon the modern novel, or upon any other kind of literature? None, that I can see

In the present volume are assembled certain fragments of the books, the all too numerous books, which I have written because I wanted to, because the wolf was at the door and I had to, because the composition of them was a form of self-exploration and self-education, and because I had things to say which I wanted people to read. The writing of these books was a pleasant process. But when it comes to reading them, reading them, it may be five, it may be ten or even twenty years after the date of writing, the case, I find, is very different. Reading what one has written is a most melancholy business. For either one approves of what one's past self wrote; and then it is depressing to think how little progress one has made. Or else one disapproves; and then one is retrospectively ashamed at having been such a fool, so wrong-headed, so vulgar, so mean, perhaps, so complacent. What one loses on the swings one loses all over again on the roundabouts. No, decidedly, if any one is to read what an author has written, it had better not be himself.

ALDOUS HUXLEY.

# CONTENTS

## STORIES

PAGE
THE GIOCONDA SMILE . . . . . . . . 3
FARD . . . . . . . . . 31
YOUNG ARCHIMEDES . . . . . . . 36
THE MONOCLE . . . . . . . . 68
CHAWDRON . . . . . . . . . 86
THE REST CURE . . . . . . . . 120
DIARY OF ANTHONY BEAVIS (from *Eyeless in Gaza*) . . 153

## TRAVEL

WHY NOT STAY AT HOME? . . . . . . 193
GUIDE-BOOKS . . . . . . . . 199
BETWEEN PESHAWAR AND LAHORE . . . . 205
AGRA . . . . . . . . . . 209
BENARES . . . . . . . . . 213
JAPAN . . . . . . . . . 217
LOS ANGELES. A RHAPSODY . . . . . 223
GUATEMALA CITY . . . . . . . 230
COPAN . . . . . . . . . 258

## ESSAYS

TIBET . . . . . . . . . 275
THE SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION . . . . . 278
FASHIONS IN LOVE . . . . . . . 291
BAUDELAIRE . . . . . . . . 299
SQUEAK AND GIBBER . . . . . . . 317
BELIEFS AND ACTIONS . . . . . . . 322
SELECTED SNOBBERIES . . . . . . 327
D. H. LAWRENCE . . . . . . . 331
WRITERS AND READERS . . . . . . 353
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? . . . 380

## POEMS

PAGE
SYMPATHY . . . . . . . . . . 409
FIRST PHILOSOPHER'S SONG . . . . . . 409
FIFTH PHILOSOPHER'S SONG . . . . . . 410
MORNING SCENE . . . . . . . . 410
THEATRE OF VARIETIES . . . . . . 410
PICTURE BY GOYA . . . . . . . 414
SEASONS . . . . . . . . . 415
TIDE . . . . . . . . . . 415
MIDSUMMER DAY . . . . . . . 416
CARPE NOCTEM . . . . . . . . 416
THE CICADAS . . . . . . . . 417

# STORIES

# THE GIOCONDA SMILE

## I

'Miss Spence will be down directly, sir.'

'Thank you,' said Mr. Hutton, without turning round. Janet Spence's parlourmaid was so ugly—ugly on purpose, it always seemed to him, malignantly, criminally ugly—that he could not bear to look at her more than was necessary. The door closed. Left to himself, Mr. Hutton got up and began to wander round the room, looking with meditative eyes at the familiar objects it contained.

Photographs of Greek statuary, photographs of the Roman Forum, coloured prints of Italian masterpieces, all very safe and well known. Poor, dear Janet, what a prig—what an intellectual snob! Her real taste was illustrated in that water-colour by the pavement artist, the one she had paid half a crown for (and thirty-five shillings for the frame). How often he had heard her tell the story, how often expatiate on the beauties of that skilful imitation of an oleograph! 'A real Artist in the streets,' and you could hear the capital A in Artist as she spoke the words. She made you feel that part of his glory had entered into Janet Spence when she tendered him that half-crown for the copy of the oleograph. She was implying a compliment to her own taste and penetration. A genuine Old Master for half a crown. Poor, dear Janet!

Mr. Hutton came to a pause in front of a small oblong mirror. Stooping a little to get a full view of his face, he passed a white, well-manicured finger over his moustache. It was as curly, as freshly auburn as it had been twenty years ago. His hair still retained its colour, and there was no sign of baldness yet—only a certain elevation of the brow. 'Shakespearian,' thought Mr. Hutton, with a smile, as he surveyed the smooth and polished expanse of his forehead.

Others abide our question, thou art free. . . . Footsteps in the sea . . . Majesty. . . . Shakespeare, thou shouldst be living at this hour. No, that was Milton, wasn't it? Milton, the Lady of Christ's. There was no lady about him. He was what the women would call a manly man. That was why they liked him—for the curly auburn moustache and the discreet redolence of tobacco. Mr. Hutton smiled again; he enjoyed making fun of himself. Lady of Christ's? No, no. He was the Christ of Ladies. Very pretty, very pretty. The Christ of Ladies. Mr. Hutton wished there were somebody he could tell the joke to. Poor, dear Janet wouldn't appreciate it, alas!

He straightened himself up, patted his hair, and resumed his peregrination. Damn the Roman Forum; he hated those dreary photographs.

Suddenly he became aware that Janet Spence was in the room, standing near the door. Mr. Hutton started, as though he had been taken in some felonious act. To make these silent and spectral appearances was one of Janet Spence's peculiar talents. Perhaps she had been there all the time, had seen him looking at himself in the mirror. Impossible! But, still, it was disquieting.

'Oh, you gave me such a surprise,' said Mr. Hutton, recovering his smile and advancing with outstretched hand to meet her.

Miss Spence was smiling too: her Gioconda smile, he had once called it in a moment of half-ironical flattery. Miss Spence had taken the compliment seriously, and always tried to live up to the Leonardo standard. She smiled on in silence while Mr. Hutton shook hands; that was part of the Gioconda business.

'I hope you 're well,' said Mr. Hutton. 'You look it.'

What a queer face she had! That small mouth pursed forward by the Gioconda expression into a little snout with a round hole in the middle as though for whistling—it was like a penholder seen from the front. Above the mouth a well-shaped nose, finely aquiline. Eyes large, lustrous, and dark, with the largeness, lustre, and darkness that seems to invite sties and an occasional bloodshot suffusion. They were fine eyes, but unchangingly grave. The penholder might do its Gioconda trick, but the eyes never altered in their earnestness. Above them, a pair of boldly arched, heavily pencilled black eyebrows lent a surprising air of power, as of a Roman matron, to the upper portion of the face. Her hair was dark and equally Roman; Agrippina from the brows upward.

'I thought I 'd just look in on my way home,' Mr. Hutton went on. 'Ah, it 's good to be back here'—he indicated with a wave of his hand the flowers in the vases, the sunshine and greenery beyond the windows—'it 's good to be back in the country after a stuffy day of business in town.'

Miss Spence, who had sat down, pointed to a chair at her side.

'No, really, I can't sit down,' Mr. Hutton protested. 'I must get back to see how poor Emily is. She was rather seedy this morning.' He sat down, nevertheless. 'It 's these wretched liver chills. She 's always getting them. Women——' He broke off and coughed, so as to hide the fact that he had uttered. He was about to say that women with weak digestions ought not to marry; but the remark was too cruel, and he didn't really believe it. Janet Spence, moreover, was a believer in eternal flames and spiritual attachments. 'She hopes to be well enough,' he added, 'to see you at luncheon to-morrow. Can you come? Do!' He smiled persuasively. 'It 's my invitation too, you know.'

She dropped her eyes, and Mr. Hutton almost thought that he detected a certain reddening of the cheek. It was a tribute; he stroked his moustache.

'I should like to come if you think Emily 's really well enough to have a visitor.'

'Of course. You 'll do her good. You 'll do us both good. In married life three is often better company than two.'

'Oh, you 're cynical.'

Mr. Hutton always had a desire to say 'Bow-wow-wow' whenever that last word was spoken. It irritated him more than any other word in the language. But instead of barking he made haste to protest.

'No, no. I 'm only speaking a melancholy truth. Reality doesn't always come up to the ideal, you know. But that doesn't make me believe any the less in the ideal. Indeed, I believe in it passionately—the ideal of a matrimony between two people in perfect accord. I think it 's realizable. I 'm sure it is.'

He paused significantly and looked at her with an arch expression. A virgin of thirty-six, but still unwithered; she had her charms. And there was something really rather enigmatic about her. Miss Spence made no reply, but continued to smile. There were times when Mr. Hutton got rather bored with the Gioconda. He stood up.

'I must really be going now. Farewell, mysterious Gioconda.' The smile grew intenser, focused itself, as it were, in a narrower snout. Mr. Hutton made a Cinquecento gesture, and kissed her extended hand. It was the first time he had done such a thing; the action seemed not to be resented. 'I look forward to to-morrow.'

'Do you?'

For answer Mr. Hutton once more kissed her hand, then turned to go. Miss Spence accompanied him to the porch.

'Where 's your car?' she asked.

'I left it at the gate of the drive.'

'I 'll come and see you off.'

'No, no.' Mr. Hutton was playful, but determined. 'You must do no such thing. I simply forbid you.'

'But I should like to come,' Miss Spence protested, throwing a rapid Gioconda at him.

Mr. Hutton held up his hand. 'No,' he repeated, and then, with a gesture that was almost the blowing of a kiss, he started to run down the drive, lightly, on his toes, with long, bounding strides like a boy's. He was proud of that run; it was quite marvellously youthful. Still, he was glad the drive was no longer. At the last bend, before passing out of sight of the house, he halted and turned round. Miss Spence was still standing on the steps, smiling her smile. He waved his hand, and this time quite definitely and overtly wafted a kiss in her direction. Then, breaking once more into his magnificent canter, he rounded the last dark promontory of trees. Once out of sight of the house he let his high paces decline to a trot, and finally to a walk. He took out his handkerchief and began wiping his neck inside his collar. What fools, what fools! Had there ever been such an ass as poor, dear Janet Spence? Never, unless it was himself. Decidedly he was the more malignant fool, since he, at least, was aware of his folly and still persisted in it. Why did he persist? Ah, the problem that was himself, the problem that was other people. . . .

He had reached the gate. A large, prosperous-looking motor was standing at the side of the road.

'Home, M'Nab.' The chauffeur touched his cap. 'And stop at the cross-roads on the way, as usual,' Mr. Hutton added, as he opened the door of the car. 'Well?' he said, speaking into the obscurity that lurked within.

'Oh, Teddy Bear, what an age you 've been!' It was a fresh and childish voice that spoke the words. There was the faintest hint of Cockney impurity about the vowel sounds.

Mr. Hutton bent his large form and darted into the car with the agility of an animal regaining its burrow.

'Have I?' he said, as he shut the door. The machine began to move. 'You must have missed me a lot if you found the time so long.' He sat back in the low seat; a cherishing warmth enveloped him.

'Teddy Bear . . .' and with a sigh of contentment a charming little head declined on to Mr. Hutton's shoulder. Ravished, he looked down sideways at the round, babyish face.

'Do you know, Doris, you look like the pictures of Louise de Kerouaille.' He passed his fingers through a mass of curly hair.

'Who 's Louise de Kera-whatever-it-is?' Doris spoke from remote distances.

'She was, alas! *Fuit*. We shall all be "was" one of these days. Meanwhile . . .'

Mr. Hutton covered the babyish face with kisses. The car rushed smoothly along. M'Nab's back, through the front window, was stonily impassive, the back of a statue.

'Your hands,' Doris whispered. 'Oh, you mustn't touch me. They give me electric shocks.'

Mr. Hutton adored her for the virgin imbecility of the words. How late in one's existence one makes the discovery of one's body!

'The electricity isn't in me, it 's in you.' He kissed her again, whispering her name several times: Doris, Doris, Doris. The scientific appellation of the sea-mouse, he was thinking as he kissed the throat she offered him, white and extended like the throat of a victim awaiting the sacrificial knife. The sea-mouse was a sausage with iridescent fur: very peculiar. Or was Doris the sea-cucumber, which turns itself inside out in moments of alarm? He would really have to go to Naples again, just to see the aquarium. These sea creatures were fabulous, unbelievably fantastic.

'Oh, Teddy Bear!' (More zoology; but he was only a land animal. His poor little jokes!) 'Teddy Bear, I 'm so happy.'

'So am I,' said Mr. Hutton. Was it true?

'But I wish I knew if it were right. Tell me, Teddy Bear, is it right or wrong?'

'Ah, my dear, that 's just what I 've been wondering for the last thirty years.'

'Be serious, Teddy Bear. I want to know if this is right; if it 's right that I should be here with you and that we should love one another, and that it should give me electric shocks when you touch me.'

'Right? Well, it 's certainly good that you should have electric shocks rather than sexual repressions. Read Freud; repressions are the devil.'

'Oh, you don't help me. Why aren't you ever serious? If only you knew how miserable I am sometimes, thinking it 's not right. Perhaps, you know, there is a hell, and all that. I don't know what to do. Sometimes I think I ought to stop loving you.'

'But could you?' asked Mr. Hutton, confident in the powers of his seduction and his moustache.

'No, Teddy Bear, you know I couldn't. But I could run away, I could hide from you, I could lock myself up and force myself not to come to you.'

'Silly little thing!' He tightened his embrace.

'Oh, dear, I hope it isn't wrong. And there are times when I don't care if it is.'

Mr. Hutton was touched. He had a certain protective affection for this little creature. He laid his cheek against her hair and so, interlaced, they sat in silence, while the car, swaying and pitching a little as it hastened along, seemed to draw in the white road and the dusty hedges towards it devouringly.

'Good-bye, good-bye.'

The car moved on, gathered speed, vanished round a curve, and Doris was left standing by the sign-post at the cross-roads, still dizzy and weak with the languor born of those kisses and the electrical touch of those gentle hands. She had to take a deep breath, to draw herself up deliberately, before she was strong enough to start her homeward walk. She had half a mile in which to invent the necessary lies.

Alone, Mr. Hutton suddenly found himself the prey of an appalling boredom.

## II

Mrs. Hutton was lying on the sofa in her boudoir, playing Patience. In spite of the warmth of the July evening a wood fire was burning on the hearth. A black Pomeranian, extenuated by the heat and the fatigues of digestion, slept before the blaze.

'Phew! Isn't it rather hot in here?' Mr. Hutton asked as he entered the room.

'You know I have to keep warm, dear.' The voice seemed breaking on the verge of tears. 'I get so shivery.'

'I hope you 're better this evening?'

'Not much, I 'm afraid.'

The conversation stagnated. Mr. Hutton stood leaning his back against the mantelpiece. He looked down at the Pomeranian lying at his feet, and with the toe of his right boot he rolled the little dog over and rubbed its white-flecked chest and belly. The creature lay in an inert ecstasy. Mrs. Hutton continued to play Patience. Arrived at an impasse, she altered the position of one card, took back another, and went on playing. Her Patiences always came out.

'Dr. Libbard thinks I ought to go to Llandrindod Wells this summer.'

'Well, go, my dear—go, most certainly.'

Mr. Hutton was thinking of the events of the afternoon: how they had driven, Doris and he, up to the hanging wood, had left the car to wait for them under the shade of the trees, and walked together out into the windless sunshine of the chalk down.

'I 'm to drink the waters for my liver, and he thinks I ought to have massage and electric treatment, too.'

Hat in hand, Doris had stalked four blue butterflies that were dancing together round a scabious flower with a motion that was like the flickering of blue fire. The blue fire burst and scattered into whirling sparks; she had given chase, laughing and shouting like a child.

'I 'm sure it will do you good, my dear.'

'I was wondering if you 'd come with me, dear.'

'But you know I 'm going to Scotland at the end of the month.'

Mrs. Hutton looked up at him entreatingly. 'It 's the journey,' she said. 'The thought of it is such a nightmare. I don't know if I can manage it. And you know I can't sleep in hotels. And then there 's the luggage and all the worries. I can't go alone.'

'But you won't be alone. You'll have your maid with you.' He spoke impatiently. The sick woman was usurping the place of the healthy one. He was being dragged back from the memory of the sunlit down and the quick, laughing girl, back to this unhealthy, overheated room and its complaining occupant.

'I don't think I shall be able to go.'

'But you must, my dear, if the doctor tells you to. And, besides, a change will do you good.'

'I don't think so.'

'But Libbard thinks so, and he knows what he 's talking about.'

'No, I can't face it. I 'm too weak. I can't go alone.

Mrs. Hutton pulled a handkerchief out of her black silk bag, and put it to her eyes.

'Nonsense, my dear, you must make the effort.'

'I had rather be left in peace to die here.' She was crying in earnest now.

'O Lord! Now do be reasonable. Listen now, please. Mrs. Hutton only sobbed more violently. 'Oh, what is one to do?' He shrugged his shoulders and walked out of the room.

Mr. Hutton was aware that he had not behaved with proper patience; but he could not help it. Very early in his manhood he had discovered that not only did he not feel sympathy for the poor, the weak, the diseased, and deformed; he actually hated them. Once, as an undergraduate, he spent three days at a mission in the East End. He had returned, filled with a profound and ineradicable disgust. Instead of pitying, he loathed the unfortunate. It was not, he knew, a very comely emotion, and he had been ashamed of it at first. In the end he had decided that it was temperamental, inevitable, and had felt no further qualms. Emily had been healthy and beautiful when he married her. He had loved her then. But now—was it his fault that she was like this?

Mr. Hutton dined alone. Food and drink left him more benevolent than he had been before dinner. To make amends for his show of exasperation he went up to his wife's room and offered to read to her. She was touched, gratefully accepted the offer, and Mr. Hutton, who was particularly proud of his accent, suggested a little light reading in French.

'French? I am so fond of French.' Mrs. Hutton spoke of the language of Racine as though it were a dish of green peas.

Mr. Hutton ran down to the library and returned with a yellow volume. He began reading. The effort of pronouncing perfectly absorbed his whole attention. But how good his accent was! The fact of its goodness seemed to improve the quality of the novel he was reading.

At the end of fifteen pages an unmistakable sound aroused him. He looked up; Mrs. Hutton had gone to sleep. He sat still for a little while, looking with a dispassionate curiosity at the sleeping face. Once it had been beautiful; once, long ago, the sight of it, the recollection of it, had moved him with an emotion profounder, perhaps, than any he had felt before or since. Now it was lined and cadaverous. The skin was stretched tightly over the cheekbones, across the bridge of the sharp, bird-like nose. The closed eyes were set in profound bone-rimmed sockets. The lamplight striking on the face from the side emphasized with light and shade its cavities and projections. It was the face of a dead Christ by Morales.

*Le squelette était invisible*
*Au temps heureux de l'art païen.*

He shivered a little, and tiptoed out of the room.

On the following day Mrs. Hutton came down to luncheon. She had had some unpleasant palpitations during the night, but she was feeling better now. Besides, she wanted to do honour to her guest. Miss Spence listened to her complaints about Llandrindod Wells, and was loud in sympathy, lavish with advice. Whatever she said was always said with intensity. She leaned forward, aimed, so to speak, like a gun, and fired her words. Bang! the charge in her soul was ignited, the words whizzed forth at the narrow barrel of her mouth. She was a machine-gun riddling her hostess with sympathy. Mr. Hutton had undergone similar bombardments, mostly of a literary or philosophic character—bombardments of Maeterlinck, of Mrs. Besant, of Bergson, of William James. To-day the missiles were medical. She talked about insomnia, she expatiated on the virtues of harmless drugs and beneficent specialists. Under the bombardment Mrs. Hutton opened out, like a flower in the sun.

Mr. Hutton looked on in silence. The spectacle of Janet Spence evoked in him an unfailing curiosity. He was not romantic enough to imagine that every face masked an interior physiognomy of beauty or strangeness, that every woman's small talk was like a vapour hanging over mysterious gulfs. His wife, for example, and Doris; they were nothing more than what they seemed to be. But with Janet Spence it was somehow different. Here one could be sure that there was some kind of a queer face behind the Gioconda smile and the Roman eyebrows. The only question was: What exactly was there? Mr. Hutton could never quite make out.

'But perhaps you won't have to go to Llandrindod after all,' Miss Spence was saying. 'If you get well quickly Dr. Libbard will let you off.'

'I only hope so. Indeed, I do really feel rather better to-day.'

Mr. Hutton felt ashamed. How much was it his own lack of sympathy that prevented her from feeling well every day? But he comforted himself by reflecting that it was only a case of feeling, not of being better. Sympathy does not mend a diseased liver or a weak heart.

'My dear, I wouldn't eat those red currants if I were you,' he said, suddenly solicitous. 'You know that Libbard has banned everything with skins and pips.'

'But I am so fond of them,' Mrs. Hutton protested, 'and I feel so well to-day.'

'Don't be a tyrant,' said Miss Spence, looking first at him and then at his wife. 'Let the poor invalid have what she fancies; it will do her good.' She laid her hand on Mrs. Hutton's arm and patted it affectionately two or three times.

'Thank you, my dear.' Mrs. Hutton helped herself to the stewed currants.

'Well, don't blame me if they make you ill again.'

'Do I ever blame you, dear?'

'You have nothing to blame me for,' Mr. Hutton answered playfully. 'I am the perfect husband.'

They sat in the garden after luncheon. From the island of shade under the old cypress tree they looked out across a flat expanse of lawn, in which the parterres of flowers shone with a metallic brilliance.

Mr. Hutton took a deep breath of the warm and fragrant air. 'It 's good to be alive,' he said.

'Just to be alive,' his wife echoed, stretching one pale, knot-jointed hand into the sunlight.

A maid brought the coffee; the silver pots and the little blue cups were set on a folding table near the group of chairs.

'Oh, my medicine!' exclaimed Mrs. Hutton. 'Run in and fetch it, Clara, will you? The white bottle on the sideboard.'

'I 'll go,' said Mr. Hutton. 'I 've got to go and fetch a cigar in any case.'

He ran in towards the house. On the threshold he turned round for an instant. The maid was walking back across the lawn. His wife was sitting up in her deck-chair, engaged in opening her white parasol. Miss Spence was bending over the table, pouring out the coffee. He passed into the cool obscurity of the house.

'Do you like sugar in your coffee?' Miss Spence inquired.

'Yes, please. Give me rather a lot. I 'll drink it after my medicine to take the taste away.'

Mrs. Hutton leaned back in her chair, lowering the sunshade over her eyes, so as to shut out from her vision the burning sky.

Behind her, Miss Spence was making a delicate clinking among the coffee-cups.

'I 've given you three large spoonfuls. That ought to take the taste away. And here comes the medicine.'

Mr. Hutton had reappeared, carrying a wineglass, half full of a pale liquid.

'It smells delicious,' he said, as he handed it to his wife.

'That 's only the flavouring.' She drank it off at a gulp, shuddered, and made a grimace. 'Ugh, it 's so nasty. Give me my coffee.'

Miss Spence gave her the cup; she sipped at it. 'You 've made it like syrup. But it 's very nice, after that atrocious medicine.'

At half-past three Mrs. Hutton complained that she did not feel as well as she had done, and went indoors to lie down. Her husband would have said something about the red currants, but checked himself; the triumph of an 'I told you so' was too cheaply won. Instead, he was sympathetic, and gave her his arm to the house.

'A rest will do you good,' he said. 'By the way, I shan't be back till after dinner.'

'But why? Where are you going?'

'I promised to go to Johnson's this evening. We have to discuss the war memorial, you know.'

'Oh, I wish you weren't going.' Mrs. Hutton was almost in tears. 'Can't you stay? I don't like being alone in the house.'

'But, my dear, I promised—weeks ago.' It was a bother having to lie like this. 'And now I must get back and look after Miss Spence.'

He kissed her on the forehead and went out again into the garden. Miss Spence received him aimed and intense.

'Your wife is dreadfully ill,' she fired off at him.

'I thought she cheered up so much when you came.'

'That was purely nervous, purely nervous. I was watching her closely. With a heart in that condition and her digestion wrecked—yes, wrecked—anything might happen.'

'Libbard doesn't take so gloomy a view of poor Emily's health.' Mr. Hutton held open the gate that led from the garden into the drive; Miss Spence's car was standing by the front door.

'Libbard is only a country doctor. You ought to see a specialist.'

He could not refrain from laughing. 'You have a macabre passion for specialists.'

Miss Spence held up her hand in protest. 'I am serious. I think poor Emily is in a very bad state. Anything might happen—at any moment.'

He handed her into the car and shut the door. The chauffeur started the engine and climbed into his place, ready to drive off.

'Shall I tell him to start?' He had no desire to continue the conversation.

Miss Spence leaned forward and shot a Gioconda in his direction. 'Remember, I expect you to come and see me again soon.'

Mechanically he grinned, made a polite noise, and, as the car moved forward, waved his hand. He was happy to be alone.

A few minutes afterwards Mr. Hutton himself drove away. Doris was waiting at the cross-roads. They dined together twenty miles from home, at a roadside hotel. It was one of those bad, expensive meals which are only cooked in country hotels frequented by motorists. It revolted Mr. Hutton, but Doris enjoyed it. She always enjoyed things. Mr. Hutton ordered a not very good brand of champagne. He was wishing he had spent the evening in his library.

When they started homewards Doris was a little tipsy and extremely affectionate. It was very dark inside the car, but looking forward, past the motionless form of M'Nab, they could see a bright and narrow universe of forms and colours scooped out of the night by the electric head-lamps.

It was after eleven when Mr. Hutton reached home. Dr. Libbard met him in the hall. He was a small man with delicate hands and well-formed features that were almost feminine. His brown eyes were large and melancholy. He used to waste a great deal of time sitting at the bedside of his patients, looking sadness through those eyes and talking in a sad, low voice about nothing in particular. His person exhaled a pleasing odour, decidedly antiseptic but at the same time suave and discreetly delicious.

'Libbard?' said Mr. Hutton in surprise. 'You here? Is my wife ill?'

'We tried to fetch you earlier,' the soft, melancholy voice replied. 'It was thought you were at Mr. Johnson's, but they had no news of you there.'

'No, I was detained. I had a breakdown,' Mr. Hutton answered irritably. It was tiresome to be caught out in a lie.

'Your wife wanted to see you urgently.'

'Well, I can go now.' Mr. Hutton moved towards the stairs.

Dr. Libbard laid a hand on his arm. 'I am afraid it 's too late.'

'Too late?' He began fumbling with his watch; it wouldn't come out of the pocket.

'Mrs. Hutton passed away half an hour ago.'

The voice remained even in its softness, the melancholy of the eyes did not deepen. Dr. Libbard spoke of death as he would speak of a local cricket match. All things were equally vain and equally deplorable.

Mr. Hutton found himself thinking of Janet Spence's words. At any moment—at any moment. She had been extraordinarily right.

'What happened?' he asked. 'What was the cause?'

Dr. Libbard explained. It was heart failure brought on by a violent attack of nausea, caused in its turn by the eating of something of an irritant nature. Red currants? Mr. Hutton suggested. Very likely. It had been too much for the heart. There was chronic valvular disease: something had collapsed under the strain. It was all over; she could not have suffered much.

## III

'It 's a pity they should have chosen the day of the Eton and Harrow match for the funeral,' old General Grego was saying as he stood, his top-hat in his hand, under the shadow of the lich-gate, wiping his face with his handkerchief.

Mr. Hutton overhead the remark and with difficulty restrained a desire to inflict grievous bodily pain on the General. He would have liked to hit the old brute in the middle of his big red face. Monstrous great mulberry, spotted with meal! Was there no respect for the dead? Did nobody care? In theory he didn't much care; let the dead bury their dead. But here, at the graveside, he had found himself actually sobbing. Poor Emily, they had been pretty happy once. Now she was lying at the bottom of a seven-foot hole. And here was Grego complaining that he couldn't go to the Eton and Harrow match.

Mr. Hutton looked round at the groups of black figures that were drifting slowly out of the churchyard towards the fleet of cabs and motors assembled in the road outside. Against the brilliant background of the July grass and flowers and foliage, they had a horribly alien and unnatural appearance. It pleased him to think that all these people would soon be dead too.

That evening Mr. Hutton sat up late in his library reading the life of Milton. There was no particular reason why he should have chosen Milton; it was the book that first came to hand, that was all. It was after midnight when he had finished. He got up from his arm-chair, unbolted the french windows, and stepped out on to the little paved terrace. The night was quiet and clear. Mr. Hutton looked at the stars and at the holes between them, dropped his eyes to the dim lawns and hueless flowers of the garden, and let them wander over the farther landscape, black and grey under the moon.

He began to think with a kind of confused violence. There were the stars, there was Milton. A man can be somehow the peer of stars and night. Greatness, nobility. But is there seriously a difference between the noble and the ignoble? Milton, the stars, death, and himself—himself. The soul, the body; the higher and the lower nature. Perhaps there was something in it, after all. Milton had a god on his side and righteousness. What had he? Nothing, nothing whatever. There were only Doris's little breasts. What was the point of it all? Milton, the stars, death, and Emily in her grave, Doris and himself—always himself. . . .

Oh, he was a futile and disgusting being. Everything convinced him of it. It was a solemn moment. He spoke aloud: 'I will, I will.' The sound of his own voice in the darkness was appalling; it seemed to him that he had sworn that infernal oath which binds even the gods: 'I will, I will.' There had been New Year's days and solemn anniversaries in the past, when he had felt the same contritions and recorded similar resolutions. They had all thinned away, these resolutions, like smoke, into nothingness. But this was a greater moment and he had pronounced a more fearful oath. In the future it was to be different. Yes, he would live by reason, he would be industrious, he would curb his appetites, he would devote his life to some good purpose. It was resolved and it would be so.

In practice he saw himself spending his mornings in agricultural pursuits, riding round with the bailiff, seeing that his land was farmed in the best modern way—silos and artificial manures and continuous cropping, and all that. The remainder of the day should be devoted to serious study. There was that book he had been intending to write for so long—*The Effect of Diseases on Civilization.*

Mr. Hutton went to bed humble and contrite, but with a sense that grace had entered into him. He slept for seven and a half hours, and woke to find the sun brilliantly shining. The emotions of the evening before had been transformed by a good night's rest into his customary cheerfulness. It was not until a good many seconds after his return to conscious life that he remembered his resolution, his Stygian oath. Milton and death seemed somehow different in the sunlight. As for the stars, they were not there. But the resolutions were good; even in the daytime he could see that. He had his horse saddled after breakfast, and rode round the farm with the bailiff. After luncheon he read Thucydides on the plague at Athens. In the evening he made a few notes on malaria in Southern Italy. While he was undressing he remembered that there was a good anecdote in Skelton's jest-book about the Sweating Sickness. He would have made a note of it if only he could have found a pencil.

On the sixth morning of his new life Mr. Hutton found among his correspondence an envelope addressed in that peculiarly vulgar handwriting which he knew to be Doris's. He opened it, and began to read. She didn't know what to say; words were so inadequate. His wife dying like that, and so suddenly—it was too terrible. Mr. Hutton sighed, but his interest revived somewhat as he read on:

Death is so frightening, I never think of it when I can help it. But when something like this happens, or when I am feeling ill or depressed, then I can't help remembering it is there so close, and I think about all the wicked things I have done and about you and me, and I wonder what will happen and I am so frightened. I am so lonely, Teddy Bear, and so unhappy, and I don't know what to do. I can't get rid of the idea of dying, I am so wretched and helpless without you. I didn't mean to write to you; I meant to wait till you were out of mourning and could come and see me again, but I was so lonely and miserable, Teddy Bear. I had to write. I couldn't help it. Forgive me, I want you so much; I have nobody in the world but you. You are so good and gentle and understanding; there is nobody like you. I shall never forget how good and kind you have been to me, and you are so clever and know so much, I can't understand how you ever came to pay any attention to me, I am so dull and stupid, much less like me and love me, because you do love me a little, don't you, Teddy Bear?

Mr. Hutton was touched with shame and remorse. To be thanked like this, worshipped for having seduced the girl—it was too much. It had just been a piece of imbecile wantonness. Imbecile, idiotic: there was no other way to describe it. For, when all was said, he had derived very little pleasure from it. Taking all things together, he had probably been more bored than amused. Once upon a time he had believed himself to be a hedonist. But to be a hedonist implies a certain process of reasoning, a deliberate choice of known pleasures, a rejection of known pains. This had been done without reason, against it. For he knew beforehand—so well, so well—that there was no interest or pleasure to be derived from these wretched affairs. And yet each time the vague itch came upon him he succumbed, involving himself once more in the old stupidity. There had been Maggie, his wife's maid, and Edith, the girl on the farm, and Mrs. Pringle, and the waitress in London, and others—there seemed to be dozens of them. It had all been so stale and boring. He knew it would be; he always knew. And yet, and yet . . . Experience doesn't teach.

Poor little Doris! He would write to her kindly, comfortingly, but he wouldn't see her again. A servant came to tell him that his horse was saddled and waiting. He mounted and rode off. That morning the old bailiff was more irritating than usual.

Five days later Doris and Mr. Hutton were sitting together on the pier at Southend; Doris, in white muslin with pink garnishings, radiated happiness; Mr. Hutton, legs outstretched and chair tilted, had pushed the panama back from his forehead, and was trying to feel like a tripper. That night, when Doris was asleep, breathing and warm by his side, he recaptured, in this moment of darkness and physical fatigue, the rather cosmic emotion which had possessed him that evening, not a fortnight ago, when he had made his great resolution. And so his solemn oath had already gone the way of so many other resolutions. Unreason had triumphed; at the first itch of desire he had given way. He was hopeless, hopeless.

For a long time he lay with closed eyes, ruminating his humiliation. The girl stirred in her sleep. Mr. Hutton turned over and looked in her direction. Enough faint light crept in between the half-drawn curtains to show her bare arm and shoulder, her neck, and the dark tangle of hair on the pillow. She was beautiful, desirable. Why did he lie there moaning over his sins? What did it matter? If he were hopeless, then so be it; he would make the best of his hopelessness. A glorious sense of irresponsibility suddenly filled him. He was free, magnificently free. In a kind of exaltation he drew the girl towards him. She woke, bewildered, almost frightened under his rough kisses.

The storm of his desire subsided into a kind of serene merriment. The whole atmosphere seemed to be quivering with enormous silent laughter.

'Could any one love you as much as I do, Teddy Bear?' The question came faintly from distant worlds of love.

'I think I know somebody who does,' Mr. Hutton replied. The submarine laughter was swelling, rising, ready to break the surface of silence and resound.

'Who? Tell me. What do you mean?' The voice had come very close; charged with suspicion, anguish, indignation, it belonged to this immediate world.

'A—ah!'

'Who?'

'You 'll never guess.' Mr. Hutton kept up the joke until it began to grow tedious, and then pronounced the name: 'Janet Spence.'

Doris was incredulous. 'Miss Spence of the Manor? That old woman?' It was too ridiculous. Mr. Hutton laughed too.

'But it 's quite true,' he said. 'She adores me.' Oh, the vast joke! He would go and see her as soon as he returned—see and conquer. 'I believe she wants to marry me,' he added.

'But you wouldn't . . . you don't intend . . .'

The air was fairly crepitating with humour. Mr. Hutton laughed aloud. 'I intend to marry you,' he said. It seemed to him the best joke he had ever made in his life.

When Mr. Hutton left Southend he was once more a married man. It was agreed that, for the time being, the fact should be kept secret. In the autumn they would go abroad together, and the world should be informed. Meanwhile he was to go back to his own house and Doris to hers.

The day after his return he walked over in the afternoon to see Miss Spence. She received him with the old Gioconda.

'I was expecting you to come.'

'I couldn't keep away,' Mr. Hutton gallantly replied.

They sat in the summer-house. It was a pleasant place—a little old stucco temple bowered among dense bushes of evergreen. Miss Spence had left her mark on it by hanging up over the seat a blue-and-white Della Robbia plaque.

'I am thinking of going to Italy this autumn,' said Mr. Hutton. He felt like a ginger-beer bottle, ready to pop with bubbling humorous excitement.

'Italy. . . .' Miss Spence closed her eyes ecstatically. 'I feel drawn there too.'

'Why not let yourself be drawn?'

'I don't know. One somehow hasn't the energy and initiative to set out alone.'

'Alone. . . .' Ah, sound of guitars and throaty singing! 'Yes, travelling alone isn't much fun.'

Miss Spence lay back in her chair without speaking. Her eyes were still closed. Mr. Hutton stroked his moustache. The silence prolonged itself for what seemed a very long time.

Pressed to stay to dinner, Mr. Hutton did not refuse. The fun had hardly started. The table was laid in the loggia. Through its arches they looked out on to the sloping garden, to the valley below and the farther hills. Light ebbed away; the heat and silence were oppressive. A huge cloud was mounting up the sky, and there were distant breathings of thunder. The thunder drew nearer, a wind began to blow, and the first drops of rain fell. The table was cleared. Miss Spence and Mr. Hutton sat on in the growing darkness.

Miss Spence broke a long silence by saying meditatively:

'I think every one has a right to a certain amount of happiness, don't you?'

'Most certainly.' But what was she leading up to? Nobody makes generalizations about life unless they mean to talk about themselves. Happiness: he looked back on his own life, and saw a cheerful, placid existence disturbed by no great griefs or discomforts or alarms. He had always had money and freedom; he had been able to do very much as he wanted. Yes, he supposed he had been happy—happier than most men. And now he was not merely happy; he had discovered in irresponsibility the secret of gaiety. He was about to say something about his happiness when Miss Spence went on speaking.

'People like you and me have a right to be happy some time in our lives.'

'Me?' said Mr. Hutton, surprised.

'Poor Henry! Fate hasn't treated either of us very well.'

'Oh, well, it might have treated me worse.'

'You 're being cheerful. That 's brave of you. But don't think I can't see behind the mask.'

Miss Spence spoke louder and louder as the rain came down more and more heavily. Periodically the thunder cut across her utterances. She talked on, shouting against the noise.

'I have understood you so well and for so long.'

A flash revealed her, aimed and intent, leaning towards him. Her eyes were two profound and menacing gun-barrels. The darkness re-engulfed her.

'You were a lonely soul seeking a companion soul. I could sympathize with you in your solitude. Your marriage . . .'

The thunder cut short the sentence. Miss Spence's voice became audible once more with the words:

'. . . could offer no companionship to a man of your stamp. You needed a soul mate.'

A soul mate—he! a soul mate. It was incredibly fantastic. 'Georgette Leblanc, the ex-soul mate of Maurice Maeterlinck.' He had seen that in the paper a few days ago. So it was thus that Janet Spence had painted him in her imagination—as a soul-mater. And for Doris he was a picture of goodness and the cleverest man in the world. And actually, really, he was —what? Who knows?

'My heart went out to you. I could understand; I was lonely, too.' Miss Spence laid her hand on his knee. 'You were so patient.' Another flash. She was still aimed, dangerously. 'You never complained. But I could guess—I could guess.'

'How wonderful of you!' So he was an *âme incomprise*. 'Only a woman's intuition . . .'

The thunder crashed and rumbled, died away, and only the sound of the rain was left. The thunder was his laughter, magnified, externalized. Flash and crash, there it was again, right on top of them.

'Don't you feel that you have within you something that is akin to this storm?' He could imagine her leaning forward as she uttered the words. 'Passion makes one the equal of the elements.'

What was his gambit now? Why, obviously, he should have said 'Yes,' and ventured on some unequivocal gesture. But Mr. Hutton suddenly took fright. The ginger beer in him had gone flat. The woman was serious—terribly serious. He was appalled.

Passion? 'No,' he desperately answered. 'I am without passion.'

But his remark was either unheard or unheeded, for Miss Spence went on with a growing exaltation, speaking so rapidly, however, and in such a burningly intimate whisper that Mr. Hutton found it very difficult to distinguish what she was saying. She was telling him, as far as he could make out, the story of her life. The lightning was less frequent now, and there were long intervals of darkness. But at each flash he saw her still aiming towards him, still yearning forward with a terrifying intensity. Darkness, the rain, and then flash! her face was there, close at hand. A pale mask, greenish white; the large eyes, the narrow barrel of the mouth, the heavy eyebrows. Agrippina, or wasn't it rather—yes, wasn't it rather George Robey?

He began devising absurd plans for escaping. He might suddenly jump up, pretending he had seen a burglar—Stop thief! stop thief!—and dash off into the night in pursuit. Or should he say that he felt faint, a heart attack? Or that he had seen a ghost—Emily's ghost—in the garden? Absorbed in his childish plotting, he had ceased to pay any attention to Miss Spence's words. The spasmodic clutching of her hand recalled his thoughts.

'I honoured you for that, Henry,' she was saying.

Honoured him for what?

'Marriage is a sacred tie, and your respect for it, even when the marriage was, as it was in your case, an unhappy one, made me respect you and admire you, and—shall I dare say the word?——'

Oh, the burglar, the ghost in the garden! But it was too late.

'. . . yes, love you, Henry, all the more. But we 're free now, Henry.'

Free? There was a movement in the dark, and she was kneeling on the floor by his chair.

'Oh, Henry, Henry, I have been unhappy too.'

Her arms embraced him, and by the shaking of her body he could feel that she was sobbing. She might have been a suppliant crying for mercy.

'You mustn't, Janet,' he protested. Those tears were terrible, terrible. 'Not now, not now! You must be calm; you must go to bed.' He patted her shoulder, then got up, disengaging himself from her embrace. He left her still crouching on the floor beside the chair on which he had been sitting.

Groping his way into the hall, and without waiting to look for his hat, he went out of the house, taking infinite pains to close the front door noiselessly behind him. The clouds had blown over, and the moon was shining from a clear sky. There were puddles all along the road, and a noise of running water rose from the gutters and ditches. Mr. Hutton splashed along, not caring if he got wet.

How heartrendingly she had sobbed! With the emotions of pity and remorse that the recollection evoked in him there was a certain resentment: why couldn't she have played the game that he was playing—the heartless, amusing game? Yes, but he had known all the time that she wouldn't, she couldn't, play that game; he had known and persisted.

What had she said about passion and the elements? Something absurdly stale, but true, true. There she was, a cloud black-bosomed and charged with thunder, and he, like some absurd little Benjamin Franklin, had sent up a kite into the heart of the menace. Now he was complaining that his toy had drawn the lightning.

She was probably still kneeling by that chair in the loggia, crying.

But why hadn't he been able to keep up the game? Why had his irresponsibility deserted him, leaving him suddenly sober in a cold world? There were no answers to any of his questions. One idea burned steady and luminous in his mind —the idea of flight. He must get away at once.

## IV

'What are you thinking about, Teddy Bear:

'Nothing.'

There was a silence. Mr. Hutton remained motionless, his elbows on the parapet of the terrace, his chin in his hands, looking down over Florence. He had taken a villa on one of the hilltops to the south of the city. From a little raised terrace at the end of the garden one looked down a long fertile valley on to the town and beyond it to the bleak mass of Monte Morello and, eastward of it, to the peopled hill of Fiesole, dotted with white houses. Everything was clear and luminous in the September sunshine.

'Are you worried about anything?'

'No, thank you.'

'Tell me, Teddy Bear.'

'But, my dear, there 's nothing to tell.' Mr. Hutton turned round, smiled, and patted the girl's hand. 'I think you 'd better go in and have your siesta. It 's too hot for you here.'

'Very well, Teddy Bear. Are you coming too?'

'When I 've finished my cigar.'

'All right. But do hurry up and finish it, Teddy Bear.' Slowly, reluctantly, she descended the steps of the terrace and walked towards the house.

Mr. Hutton continued his contemplation of Florence. He had need to be alone. It was good sometimes to escape from Doris and the restless solicitude of her passion. He had never known the pains of loving hopelessly, but he was experiencing now the pains of being loved. These last weeks had been a period of growing discomfort. Doris was always with him, like an obsession, like a guilty conscience. Yes, it was good to be alone.

He pulled an envelope out of his pocket and opened it, not without reluctance. He hated letters; they always contained something unpleasant—nowadays, since his second marriage. This was from his sister. He began skimming through the insulting home-truths of which it was composed. The words 'indecent haste,' 'social suicide,' 'scarcely cold in her grave,' 'person of the lower classes,' all occurred. They were inevitable now in any communication from a well-meaning and right-thinking relative. Impatient, he was about to tear the stupid letter to pieces when his eye fell on a sentence at the bottom of the third page. His heart beat with uncomfortable violence as he read it. It was too monstrous! Janet Spence was going about telling every one that he had poisoned his wife in order to marry Doris. What damnable malice! Ordinarily a man of the suavest temper, Mr. Hutton found himself trembling with rage. He took the childish satisfaction of calling names—he cursed the woman.

Then suddenly he saw the ridiculous side of the situation. The notion that he should have murdered any one in order to marry Doris! If they only knew how miserably bored he was. Poor, dear Janet! She had tried to be malicious; she had only succeeded in being stupid.

A sound of footsteps aroused him; he looked round. In the garden below the little terrace the servant girl of the house was picking fruit. A Neapolitan, strayed somehow as far north as Florence, she was a specimen of the classical type—a little debased. Her profile might have been taken from a Sicilian coin of a bad period. Her features, carved floridly in the grand tradition, expressed an almost perfect stupidity. Her mouth was the most beautiful thing about her; the calligraphic hand of nature had richly curved it into an expression of mulish bad temper. . . . Under her hideous black clothes, Mr. Hutton divined a powerful body, firm and massive. He had looked at her before with a vague interest and curiosity. To-day the curiosity defined and focused itself into a desire. An idyll of Theocritus. Here was the woman; he, alas, was not precisely like a goatherd on the volcanic hills. He called to her.

'Armida!'

The smile with which she answered him was so provocative, attested so easy a virtue, that Mr. Hutton took fright. He was on the brink once more—on the brink. He must draw back, oh! quickly, quickly, before it was too late. The girl continued to look up at him.

'*Ha chiamato?*' she asked at last.

Stupidity or reason? Oh, there was no choice now. It was imbecility every time.

'*Scendo,*' he called back to her. Twelve steps led from the garden to the terrace. Mr. Hutton counted them. Down, down, down, down. . . . He saw a vision of himself descending from one circle of the inferno to the next—from a darkness full of wind and hail to an abyss of stinking mud.

## V

For a good many days the Hutton case had a place on the front page of every newspaper. There had been no more popular murder trial since George Smith had temporarily eclipsed the European War by drowning in a warm bath his seventh bride. The public imagination was stirred by this tale of a murder brought to light months after the date of the crime. Here, it was felt, was one of those incidents in human life, so notable because they are so rare, which do definitely justify the ways of God to man. A wicked man had been moved by an illicit passion to kill his wife. For months he had lived in sin and fancied security—only to be dashed at last more horribly into the pit he had prepared for himself. Murder will out, and here was a case of it. The readers of the newspapers were in a position to follow every movement of the hand of God. There had been vague, but persistent, rumours in the neighbourhood; the police had taken action at last.

Then came the exhumation order, the post-mortem examination, the inquest, the evidence of the experts, the verdict of the coroner's jury, the trial, the condemnation. For once Providence had done its duty, obviously, grossly, didactically, as in a melodrama. The newspapers were right in making of the case the staple intellectual food of a whole season.

Mr. Hutton's first emotion when he was summoned from Italy to give evidence at the inquest was one of indignation. It was a monstrous, a scandalous thing that the police should take such idle, malicious gossip seriously. When the inquest was over he would bring an action for malicious prosecution against the Chief Constable; he would sue the Spence woman for slander.

The inquest was opened; the astonishing evidence unrolled itself. The experts had examined the body, and had found traces of arsenic; they were of opinion that the late Mrs. Hutton had died of arsenic poisoning.

Arsenic poisoning. . . . Emily had died of arsenic poisoning? After that, Mr. Hutton learned with surprise that there was enough arsenicated insecticide in his greenhouses to poison an army.

It was now, quite suddenly, that he saw it: there was a case against him. Fascinated, he watched it growing, growing, like some monstrous tropical plant. It was enveloping him, surrounding him; he was lost in a tangled forest.

When was the poison administered? The experts agreed that it must have been swallowed eight or nine hours before death. About lunch-time? Yes, about lunch-time. Clara, the parlour-maid, was called. Mrs. Hutton, she remembered, had asked her to go and fetch her medicine. Mr. Hutton had volunteered to go instead; he had gone alone. Miss Spence—ah, the memory of the storm, the white aimed face! the horror of it all!—Miss Spence confirmed Clara's statement, and added that Mr. Hutton had come back with the medicine already poured out in a wineglass, not in the bottle.

Mr. Hutton's indignation evaporated. He was dismayed, frightened. It was all too fantastic to be taken seriously, and yet this nightmare was a fact—it was actually happening.

M'Nab had seen them kissing, often. He had taken them for a drive on the day of Mrs. Hutton's death. He could see them reflected in the wind-screen, sometimes out of the tail of his eye.

The inquest was adjourned. That evening Doris went to bed with a headache. When he went to her room after dinner, Mr. Hutton found her crying.

'What 's the matter?' He sat down on the edge of her bed and began to stroke her hair. For a long time she did not answer, and he went on stroking her hair mechanically, almost unconsciously; sometimes, even, he bent down and kissed her bare shoulder. He had his own affairs, however, to think about. What had happened? How was it that the stupid gossip had actually come true? Emily had died of arsenic poisoning. It was absurd, impossible. The order of things had been broken, and he was at the mercy of an irresponsibility. What had happened, what was going to happen? He was interrupted in the midst of his thoughts.

'It 's my fault—it 's my fault!' Doris suddenly sobbed out. 'I shouldn't have loved you; I oughtn't to have let you love me. Why was I ever born?'

Mr. Hutton didn't say anything, but looked down in silence at the abject figure of misery lying on the bed.

'If they do anything to you I shall kill myself.'

She sat up, held him for a moment at arm's length, and looked at him with a kind of violence, as though she were never to see him again.

'I love you, I love you, I love you.' She drew him, inert and passive, towards her, clasped him, pressed herself against him. 'I didn't know you loved me as much as that, Teddy Bear. But why did you do it—why did you do it?'

Mr. Hutton undid her clasping arms and got up. His face became very red. 'You seem to take it for granted that I murdered my wife,' he said. 'It 's really too grotesque. What do you all take me for? A cinema hero?' He had begun to lose his temper. All the exasperation, all the fear and bewilderment of the day, was transformed into a violent anger against her. 'It 's all such damned stupidity. Haven't you any conception of a civilized man's mentality? Do I look the sort of man who 'd go about slaughtering people? I suppose you imagined I was so insanely in love with you that I could commit any folly. When will you women understand that one isn't insanely in love? All one asks for is a quiet life, which you won't allow one to have. I don't know what the devil ever induced me to marry you. It was all a damned stupid, practical joke. And now you go about saying I 'm a murderer. I won't stand it.'

Mr. Hutton stamped towards the door. He had said horrible things, he knew—odious things that he ought speedily to unsay. But he wouldn't. He closed the door behind him.

'Teddy Bear!' He turned the handle; the latch clicked into place. 'Teddy Bear!' The voice that came to him through the closed door was agonized. Should he go back? He ought to go back. He touched the handle, then withdrew his fingers and quickly walked away. When he was half-way down the stairs he halted. She might try to do something silly—throw herself out of the window or God knows what! He listened attentively; there was no sound. But he pictured her very clearly, tiptoeing across the room, lifting the sash as high as it would go, leaning out into the cold night air. It was raining a little. Under the window lay the paved terrace. How far below? Twenty-five or thirty feet? Once, when he was walking along Piccadilly, a dog had jumped out of a third-story window of the Ritz. He had seen it fall; he had heard it strike the pavement. Should he go back? He was damned if he would; he hated her.

He sat for a long time in the library. What had happened? What was happening? He turned the question over and over in his mind and could find no answer. Suppose the nightmare dreamed itself out to its horrible conclusion. Death was waiting for him. His eyes filled with tears; he wanted so passionately to live. 'Just to be alive.' Poor Emily had wished it too, he remembered: 'Just to be alive.' There were still so many places in this astonishing world unvisited, so many queer delightful people still unknown, so many lovely women never so much as seen. The huge white oxen would still be dragging their wains along the Tuscan roads, the cypresses would still go up, straight as pillars, to the blue heaven; but he would not be there to see them. And the sweet southern wines —Tear of Christ and Blood of Judas—others would drink them, not he. Others would walk down the obscure and narrow lanes between the bookshelves in the London Library, sniffing the dusty perfume of good literature, peering at strange titles, discovering unknown names, exploring the fringes of vast domains of knowledge. He would be lying in a hole in the ground. And why, why? Confusedly he felt that some extraordinary kind of justice was being done. In the past he had been wanton and imbecile and irresponsible. Now Fate was playing as wantonly, as irresponsibly, with him. It was tit for tat, and God existed after all.

He felt that he would like to pray. Forty years ago he used to kneel by his bed every evening. The nightly formula of his childhood came to him almost unsought from some long unopened chamber of the memory. 'God bless Father and Mother, Tom and Cissie and the Baby, Mademoiselle and Nurse, and every one that I love, and make me a good boy. Amen.' They were all dead now—all except Cissie.

His mind seemed to soften and dissolve; a great calm descended upon his spirit. He went upstairs to ask Doris's forgiveness. He found her lying on the couch at the foot of the bed. On the floor beside her stood a blue bottle of liniment, marked 'Not to be taken' she seemed to have drunk about half of it.

'You didn't love me,' was all she said when she opened her eyes to find him bending over her.

Dr. Libbard arrived in time to prevent any very serious consequences. 'You mustn't do this again,' he said while Mr. Hutton was out of the room.

'What 's to prevent me?' she asked defiantly.

Dr. Libbard looked at her with his large, sad eyes. 'There 's nothing to prevent you,' he said. 'Only yourself and your baby. Isn't it rather bad luck on your baby, not allowing it to come into the world because you want to go out of it?'

Doris was silent for a time. 'All right,' she whispered. 'I won't.'

Mr. Hutton sat by her bedside for the rest of the night. He felt himself now to be indeed a murderer. For a time he persuaded himself that he loved this pitiable child. Dozing in his chair, he woke up, stiff and cold, to find himself drained dry, as it were, of every emotion. He had become nothing but a tired and suffering carcase. At six o'clock he undressed and went to bed for a couple of hours' sleep. In the course of the same afternoon the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of 'Wilful Murder,' and Mr. Hutton was committed for trial.

## VI

Miss Spence was not at all well. She had found her public appearances in the witness-box very trying, and when it was all over she had something that was very nearly a breakdown. She slept badly, and suffered from nervous indigestion. Dr. Libbard used to call every other day. She talked to him a great deal—mostly about the Hutton case. . . . Her moral indignation was always on the boil. Wasn't it appalling to think that one had had a murderer in one's house? Wasn't is extraordinary that one could have been for so long mistaken about the man's character? (But she had had an inkling from the first.) And then the girl he had gone off with—so low class, so little better than a prostitute. The news that the second Mrs. Hutton was expecting a baby—the posthumous child of a condemned and executed criminal—revolted her; the thing was shocking—an obscenity. Dr. Libbard answered her gently and vaguely, and prescribed bromide.

One morning he interrupted her in the midst of her customary tirade. 'By the way,' he said in his soft, melancholy voice, 'I suppose it was really you who poisoned Mrs. Hutton?'

Miss Spence stared at him for two or three seconds with enormous eyes, and then quietly said: 'Yes.' After that she started to cry.

'In the coffee, I suppose?'

She seemed to nod assent. Dr. Libbard took out his fountain-pen, and in his neat, meticulous calligraphy wrote out a prescription for a sleeping-draught.

*From* MORTAL COILS (1922).

# FARD

THEY had been quarrelling now for nearly three-quarters of an hour. Muted and inarticulate, the voices floated down the corridor, from the other end of the flat. Stooping over her sewing, Sophie wondered, without much curiosity, what it was all about this time. It was Madame's voice that she heard most often. Shrill with anger and indignant with tears, it burst out in gusts, in gushes. Monsieur was more self-controlled, and his deeper voice was too softly pitched to penetrate easily the closed doors and to carry along the passage. To Sophie, in her cold little room, the quarrel sounded, most of the time, like a series of monologues by Madame, interrupted by strange and ominous silences. But every now and then Monsieur seemed to lose his temper outright, and then there was no silence between the gusts, but a harsh, deep, angry shout. Madame kept up her loud shrillness continuously and without flagging; her voice had, even in anger, a curious, level monotony. But Monsieur spoke now loudly, now softly, with emphases and modulations and sudden outbursts, so that his contributions to the squabble, when they were audible, sounded like a series of separate explosions. Bow, wow, wow-wow-wow, wow—a dog barking rather slowly.

After a time Sophie paid no more heed to the noise of quarrelling. She was mending one of Madame's camisoles, and the work required all her attention. She felt very tired; her body ached all over. It had been a hard day; so had yesterday, so had the day before. Every day was a hard day, and she wasn't so young as she had been. Two years more and she 'd be fifty. Every day had been a hard day ever since she could remember. She thought of the sacks of potatoes she used to carry when she was a little girl in the country. Slowly, slowly she was walking along the dusty road with the sack over her shoulder. Ten steps more; she could manage that. Only it never was the end; one always had to begin again.

She looked up from her sewing, moved her head from side to side, blinked. She had begun to see lights and spots of colour dancing before her eyes; it often happened to her now. A sort of yellowish bright worm was wriggling up towards the right-hand corner of her field of vision; and though it was always moving upwards, upwards, it was always there in the same place. And there were stars of red and green that snapped and brightened and faded all round the worm. They moved between her and her sewing; they were there when she shut her eyes. After a moment she went on with her work; Madame wanted her camisole most particularly to-morrow morning. But it was difficult to see round the worm.

There was suddenly a great increase of noise from the other end of the corridor. A door had opened; words articulated themselves.

'. . . bien tort, mon ami, si tu crois que je suis ton esclave. Je ferai ce que je voudrai.'

'Moi aussi.' Monsieur uttered a harsh, dangerous laugh. There was the sound of heavy footsteps in the passage, a rattling in the umbrella stand; then the front door banged.

Sophie looked down again at her work. Oh, the worm, the coloured stars, the aching fatigue in all her limbs! If one could only spend a whole day in bed—in a huge bed, feathery, warm, and soft, all the day long . . .

The ringing of the bell startled her. It always made her jump, that furious wasp-like buzzer. She got up, put her work down on the table, smoothed her apron, set straight her cap, and stepped out into the corridor. Once more the bell buzzed furiously. Madame was impatient.

'At last, Sophie. I thought you were never coming.'

Sophie said nothing; there was nothing to say. Madame was standing in front of the open wardrobe. A bundle of dresses hung over her arm, and there were more of them lying in a heap on the bed.

'Une beauté à la Rubens,' her husband used to call her when he was in an amorous mood. He liked these massive, splendid, great women. None of your flexible drain-pipes for him. 'Hélène Fourmont' was his pet name for her.

'Some day,' Madame used to tell her friends, 'some day I really must go to the Louvre and see my portrait. By Rubens, you know. It 's extraordinary that one should have lived all one's life in Paris and never have seen the Louvre. Don't you think so?'

She was superb to-night. Her cheeks were flushed; her blue eyes shone with an unusual brilliance between their long lashes; her short, red-brown hair had broken wildly loose.

'To-morrow, Sophie,' she said dramatically, 'we start for Rome. To-morrow morning.' She unhooked another dress from the wardrobe as she spoke, and threw it on to the bed. With the movement her dressing-gown flew open, and there was a vision of ornate underclothing and white exuberant flesh. 'We must pack at once.'

'For how long, Madame?'

'A fortnight, three months—how should I know?'

'It makes a difference, Madame.'

'The important thing is to get away. I shall not return to this house, after what has been said to me to-night, till I am humbly asked to.'

'We had better take the large trunk, then, Madame; I will go and fetch it.'

The air in the box-room was sickly with the smell of dust and leather. The big trunk was jammed in a far corner. She had to bend and strain at it in order to pull it out. The worm and the coloured stars flickered before her eyes; she felt dizzy when she straightened herself up. 'I 'll help you to pack, Sophie,' said Madame, when the servant returned, dragging the heavy trunk after her. What a death's-head the old woman looked nowadays! She hated having old, ugly people near her. But Sophie was so efficient; it would be madness to get rid of her.

'Madame need not trouble.' There would be no end to it, Sophie knew, if Madame started opening drawers and throwing things about. 'Madame had much better go to bed. It 's late.'

No, no. She wouldn't be able to sleep. She was to such a degree enervated. These men . . . What an embeastment! One was not their slave. One would not be treated in this way.

Sophie was packing. A whole day in bed, in a huge, soft bed, like Madame's. One would doze, one would wake up for a moment, one would doze again.

'His latest game,' Madame was saying indignantly, 'is to tell me he hasn't got any money. I 'm not to buy any clothes, he says. Too grotesque. I can't go about naked, can I?' She threw out her hands. 'And as for saying he can't afford, that 's simply nonsense. He can, perfectly well. Only he 's mean, mean, horribly mean. And if he 'd only do a little honest work, for a change, instead of writing silly verses and publishing them at his own expense, he 'd have plenty and to spare.' She walked up and down the room. 'Besides,' she went on, 'there 's his old father. What 's he for, I should like to know? "You must be proud of having a poet for a husband," he says.'

She made her voice quaver like an old man's. 'It 's all I can do not to laugh in his face. "And what beautiful verses Hégésippe writes about you! What passion, what fire!"' Thinking of the old man, she grimaced, wobbled her head, shook her finger, doddered on her legs. 'And when one reflects that poor Hégésippe is bald, and dyes the few hairs he has left.' She laughed. 'As for the passion he talks so much about in his beastly verses,' she laughed—'that 's all pure invention. But, my good Sophie, what are you thinking of? Why are you packing that hideous old green dress?'

Sophie pulled out the dress without saying anything. Why did the woman choose this night to look so terribly ill? She had a yellow face and blue teeth. Madame shuddered; it was too horrible. She ought to send her to bed. But, after all, the work had to be done. What could one do about it? She felt more than ever aggrieved.

'Life is terrible.' Sighing, she sat down heavily on the edge of the bed. The buoyant springs rocked her gently once or twice before they settled to rest. 'To be married to a man like this. I shall soon be getting old and fat. And never once unfaithful. But look how he treats me.' She got up again and began to wander aimlessly about the room. 'I won't stand it, though,' she burst out. She had halted in front of the long mirror, and was admiring her own splendid tragic figure. No one would believe, to look at her, that she was over thirty. Behind the beautiful tragedian she could see in the glass a thin, miserable, old creature, with a yellow face and blue teeth, crouching over the trunk. Really, it was too disagreeable. Sophie looked like one of those beggar women one sees on a cold morning, standing in the gutter. Does one hurry past, trying not to look at them? Or does one stop, open one's purse, and give them one's copper and nickel—even as much as a two-franc note, if one has no change? But whatever one did, one always felt uncomfortable, one always felt apologetic for one's furs. That was what came of walking. If one had a car—but that was another of Hégésippe's meannesses—one wouldn't, rolling along behind closed windows, have to be conscious of them at all. She turned away from the glass.

'I won't stand it,' she said, trying not to think of the beggar women, of blue teeth in a yellow face; 'I won't stand it.' She dropped into a chair.

But think of a lover with a yellow face and blue, uneven teeth! She closed her eyes, shuddered at the thought. It would be enough to make one sick. She felt impelled to take another look: Sophie's eyes were the colour of greenish lead, quite without life. What was one to do about it? The woman's face was a reproach, an accusation. And besides, the sight of it was making her feel positively ill. She had never been so profoundly enervated.

Sophie rose slowly and with difficulty from her knees; an expression of pain crossed her face. Slowly she walked to the chest of drawers, slowly counted out six pairs of silk stockings. She turned back towards the trunk. The woman was a walking corpse!

'Life is terrible,' Madame repeated with conviction, 'terrible, terrible, terrible.'

She ought to send the woman to bed. But she would never be able to get her packing done by herself. And it was so important to get off to-morrow morning. She had told Hégésippe she would go, and he had simply laughed; he hadn't believed it. She must give him a lesson this time. In Rome she would see Luigino. Such a charming boy, and a marquis, too. Perhaps . . . But she could think of nothing but Sophie's face; the leaden eyes, the bluish teeth, the yellow, wrinkled skin.

'Sophie,' she said suddenly; it was with difficulty that she prevented herself screaming, 'look on my dressing-table. You'll see a box of rouge, the Dorin number twenty-four. Put a little on your cheeks. And there's a stick of lip salve in the right-hand drawer.'

She kept her eyes resolutely shut while Sophie got up—with what a horrible creaking of the joints!—walked over to the dressing-table, and stood there, rustling faintly, through what seemed an eternity. What a life, my God, what a life! Slow footsteps trailed back again. She opened her eyes. Oh, that was far better, far better.

'Thank you, Sophie. You look much less tired now.' She got up briskly. 'And now we must hurry.' Full of energy, she ran to the wardrobe. 'Goodness me,' she exclaimed, throwing up her hands, 'you've forgotten to put in my blue evening dress. How could you be so stupid, Sophie?'

*From* LITTLE MEXICAN (1924).

# YOUNG ARCHIMEDES

It was the view which finally made us take the place. True, the house had its disadvantages. It was a long way out of town and had no telephone. The rent was unduly high, the drainage system poor. On windy nights, when the ill-fitting panes were rattling so furiously in the window-frames that you could fancy yourself in an hotel omnibus, the electric light, for some mysterious reason, used invariably to go out and leave you in the noisy dark. There was a splendid bathroom; but the electric pump, which was supposed to send up water from the rain-water tanks in the terrace, did not work. Punctually every autumn the drinking well ran dry. And our landlady was a liar and a cheat.

But these are the little disadvantages of every hired house, all over the world. For Italy they were not really at all serious. I have seen plenty of houses which had them all and a hundred others, without possessing the compensating advantages of ours—the southward facing garden and terrace for the winter and spring, the large cool rooms against the midsummer heat, the hilltop air and freedom from mosquitoes, and finally the view.

And what a view it was! Or rather, what a succession of views. For it was different every day; and without stirring from the house one had the impression of an incessant change of scene: all the delights of travel without its fatigues. There were autumn days when all the valleys were filled with mist and the crests of the Apennines rose darkly out of a flat white lake. There were days when the mist invaded even our hilltop and we were enveloped in a soft vapour in which the mist-coloured olive trees, that sloped away below our windows towards the valley, disappeared as though into their own spiritual essence; and the only firm and definite things in the small, dim world within which we found ourselves confined were the two tall black cypresses growing on a little projecting terrace a hundred feet down the hill. Black, sharp, and solid, they stood there, twin pillars of Hercules at the extremity of the known universe; and beyond them there was only pale cloud and round them only the cloudy olive trees.

These were the wintry days; but there were days of spring and autumn, days unchangingly cloudless, or—more lovely still—made various by the huge floating shapes of vapour that, snowy above the far-away snow-capped mountains, gradually unfolded, against the pale bright blue, enormous heroic gestures. And in the height of the sky the bellying draperies, the swans, the aerial marbles, hewed and left unfinished by gods grown tired of creation almost before they had begun, drifted sleeping along the wind, changing form as they moved. And the sun would come and go behind them; and now the town in the valley would fade and almost vanish in the shadow, and now, like an immense fretted jewel between the hills, it would glow as though by its own light. And looking across the nearer tributary valley that wound from below our crest down towards the Arno, looking over the low dark shoulder of hill on whose extreme promontory stood the towered church of San Miniato, one saw the huge dome airily hanging on its ribs of masonry, the square campanile, the sharp spire of Santa Croce, and the canopied tower of the Signoria, rising above the intricate maze of houses, distinct and brilliant, like small treasures carved out of precious stones. For a moment only, and then their light would fade away once more, and the travelling beam would pick out, among the indigo hills beyond, a single golden crest.

There were days when the air was wet with passed or with approaching rain, and all the distances seemed miraculously near and clear. The olive trees detached themselves one from another on the distant slopes; the far-away villages were lovely and pathetic like the most exquisite small toys. There were days in summer-time, days of impending thunder when, bright and sunlit against huge bellying masses of black and purple, the hills and the white houses shone as it were precariously, in a dying splendour, on the brink of some fearful calamity.

How the hills changed and varied! Every day and every hour of the day, almost, they were different. There would be moments when, looking across the plain of Florence, one would see only a dark blue silhouette against the sky. The scene had no depth; there was only a hanging curtain painted flatly with the symbols of mountains. And then, suddenly almost, with the passing of a cloud, or when the sun had declined to a certain level in the sky, the flat scene transformed itself; and where there had been only a painted curtain, now there were ranges behind ranges of hills, graduated tone after tone from brown, or grey, or a green gold to far-away blue. Shapes that a moment before had been fused together indiscriminately into a single mass, now came apart into their constituents. Fiesole, which had seemed only a spur of Monte Morello, now revealed itself as the jutting headland of another system of hills, divided from the nearest bastions of its greater neighbour by a deep and shadowy valley.

At noon, during the heats of summer, the landscape became dim, powdery, vague, and almost colourless under the midday sun; the hills disappeared into the trembling fringes of the sky. But as the afternoon wore on the landscape emerged again, it dropped its anonymity, it climbed back out of nothingness into form and life. And its life, as the sun sank and slowly sank through the long afternoon, grew richer, grew more intense with every moment. The level light, with its attendant long, dark shadows, laid bare, so to speak, the anatomy of the land; the hills—each western escarpment shining, and each slope averted from the sunlight profoundly shadowed—became massive, jutty, and solid. Little folds and dimples in the seemingly even ground revealed themselves. Eastward from our hilltop, across the plain of the Ema, a great bluff cast its ever-increasing shadow; in the surrounding brightness of the valley a whole tone lay eclipsed within it. And as the sun expired on the horizon, the farther hills flushed in its warm light, till their illumined flanks were the colour of tawny roses; but the valleys were already filled with the blue mist of evening. And it mounted, mounted; the fire went out of the western windows of the populous slopes; only the crests were still alight, and at last they too were all extinct. The mountains faded and fused together again into a flat painting of mountains against the pale evening sky. In a little while it was night; and if the moon were full, a ghost of the dead scene still haunted the horizons.

Changeful in its beauty, this wide landscape always preserved a quality of humanness and domestication which made it, to my mind at any rate, the best of all landscapes to live with. Day by day one travelled through its different beauties; but the journey, like our ancestors' Grand Tour, was always a journey through civilization. For all its mountains, its steep slopes, and deep valleys, the Tuscan scene is dominated by its inhabitants. They have cultivated every rood of ground that can be cultivated; their houses are thickly scattered even over the hills, and the valleys are populous. Solitary on the hilltop, one is not alone in a wilderness. Man's traces are across the country, and already—one feels it with satisfaction as one looks out across it—for centuries, for thousands of years, it has been his, submissive, tamed, and humanized. The wide, blank moorlands, the sands, the forests of innumerable trees—these are places for occasional visitation, healthful to the spirit which submits itself to them for not too long. But fiendish influences as well as divine haunt these total solitudes. The vegetative life of plants and things is alien and hostile to the human. Men cannot live at ease except where they have mastered their surroundings and where their accumulated lives outnumber and outweigh the vegetative lives about them. Stripped of its dark woods, planted, terraced, and tilled almost to the mountains' tops, the Tuscan landscape is humanized and safe. Sometimes upon those who live in the midst of it there comes a longing for some place that is solitary, inhuman, lifeless, or peopled only with alien life. But the longing is soon satisfied, and one is glad to return to the civilized and submissive scene.

I found that house on the hilltop the ideal dwelling-place. For there, safe in the midst of a humanized landscape, one was yet alone; one could be as solitary as one liked. Neighbours whom one never sees at close quarters are the ideal and perfect neighbours.

Our nearest neighbours, in terms of physical proximity, lived very near. We had two sets of them, as a matter of fact, almost in the same house with us. One was the peasant family, who lived in a long, low building, part dwelling-house, part stables, storerooms, and cowsheds, adjoining the villa. Our other neighbours—intermittent neighbours, however, for they only ventured out of town every now and then, during the most flawless weather—were the owners of the villa, who had reserved for themselves the smaller wing of the huge L-shaped house—a mere dozen rooms or so—leaving the remaining eighteen or twenty to us.

They were a curious couple, our proprietors. An old husband, grey, listless, tottering, seventy at least; and a signora of about forty, short, very plump, with tiny fat hands and feet and a pair of very large, very dark black eyes, which she used with all the skill of a born comedian. Her vitality, if you could have harnessed it and made it do some useful work, would have supplied a whole town with electric light. The physicists talk of deriving energy from the atom; they would be more profitably employed nearer home—in discovering some way of tapping those enormous stores of vital energy which accumulate in unemployed women of sanguine temperament and which, in the present imperfect state of social and scientific organization, vent themselves in ways that are generally so deplorable: in interfering with other people's affairs, in working up emotional scenes, in thinking about love and making it, and in bothering men till they cannot get on with their work.

Signora Bondi got rid of her superfluous energy, among other ways, by 'doing in' her tenants. The old gentleman, who was a retired merchant with a reputation for the most perfect rectitude, was allowed to have no dealings with us. When we came to see the house, it was the wife who showed us round. It was she who, with a lavish display of charm, with irresistible rollings of the eyes, expatiated on the merits of the place, sang the praises of the electric pump, glorified the bathroom (considering which, she insisted, the rent was remarkably moderate), and when we suggested calling in a surveyor to look over the house, earnestly begged us, as though our well-being were her only consideration, not to waste our money unnecessarily in doing anything so superfluous. 'After all,' she said, 'we are honest people. I wouldn't dream of letting you the house except in perfect condition. Have confidence.' And she looked at me with an appealing, pained expression in her magnificent eyes, as though begging me not to insult her by my coarse suspiciousness. And leaving us no time to pursue the subject of surveyors any further, she began assuring us that our little boy was the most beautiful angel she had ever seen. By the time our interview with Signora Bondi was at an end, we had definitely decided to take the house.

'Charming woman,' I said, as we left the house. But I think that Elizabeth was not quite so certain of it as I.

Then the pump episode began.

On the evening of our arrival in the house we switched on the electricity. The pump made a very professional whirring noise; but no water came out of the taps in the bathroom. We looked at one another doubtfully.

'Charming woman?' Elizabeth raised her eyebrows.

We asked for interviews; but somehow the old gentleman could never see us, and the Signora was invariably out or indisposed. We left notes; they were never answered. In the end, we found that the only method of communicating with our landlords, who were living in the same house with us, was to go down into Florence and send a registered express letter to them. For this they had to sign two separate receipts and even, if we chose to pay forty centimes more, a third incriminating document, which was then returned to us. There could be no pretending, as there always was with ordinary letters or notes, that the communication had never been received. We began at last to get answers to our complaints. The Signora, who wrote all the letters, started by telling us that, naturally, the pump didn't work, as the cisterns were empty, owing to the long drought. I had to walk three miles to the post office in order to register my letter reminding her that there had been a violent thunderstorm only last Wednesday, and that the tanks were consequently more than half full. The answer came back: bath water had not been guaranteed in the contract; and if I wanted it, why hadn't I had the pump looked at before I took the house? Another walk into town to ask the Signora next door whether she remembered her adjurations to us to have confidence in her, and to inform her that the existence in a house of a bathroom was in itself an implicit guarantee of bath water. The reply to that was that the Signora couldn't continue to have communications with people who wrote so rudely to her. After that I put the matter into the hands of a lawyer. Two months later the pump was actually replaced. But we had to serve a writ on the lady before she gave in. And the costs were considerable.

One day, towards the end of the episode, I met the old gentleman in the road, taking his big maremman dog for a walk—or being taken, rather, for a walk by the dog. For where the dog pulled the old gentleman had perforce to follow. And when it stopped to smell, or scratch the ground, or leave against a gatepost its visiting-card or an offensive challenge, patiently, at his end of the leash, the old man had to wait. I passed him standing at the side of the road, a few hundred yards below our house. The dog was sniffing at the roots of one of the twin cypresses which grew one on either side of the entry to a farm; I heard the beast growling indignantly to itself, as though it scented an intolerable insult. Old Signor Bondi, leashed to his dog, was waiting. The knees inside the tubular grey trousers were slightly bent. Leaning on his cane, he stood gazing mournfully and vacantly at the view. The whites of his old eyes were discoloured, like ancient billiard balls. In the grey, deeply wrinkled face, his nose was dyspeptically red. His white moustache, ragged and yellowing at the fringes, drooped in a melancholy curve. In his black tie he wore a very large diamond; perhaps that was what Signora Bondi had found so attractive about him.

I took off my hat as I approached. The old man stared at me absently, and it was only when I was already almost past him that he recollected who I was.

'Wait,' he called after me, 'wait!' And he hastened down the road in pursuit. Taken utterly by surprise and at a disadvantage—for it was engaged in retorting to the affront imprinted on the cypress roots—the dog permitted itself to be jerked after him. Too much astonished to be anything but obedient, it followed its master. 'Wait!'

I waited.

'My dear sir,' said the old gentleman, catching me by the lapel of my coat and blowing most disagreeably in my face. 'I want to apologize.' He looked around him, as though afraid that even here he might be overheard. 'I want to apologize,' he went on, 'about that wretched pump business. I assure you that, if it had been only my affair, I'd have put the thing right as soon as you asked. You were quite right: a bathroom is an implicit guarantee of bath water. I saw from the first that we should have no chance if it came to court. And besides, I think one ought to treat one's tenants as handsomely as one can afford to. But my wife'—he lowered his voice—'the fact is that she likes this sort of thing, even when she knows that she's in the wrong and must lose. And besides, she hoped, I dare say, that you'd get tired of asking and have the job done yourself. I told her from the first that we ought to give in; but she wouldn't listen. You see, she enjoys it. Still, now she sees that it must be done. In the course of the next two or three days you'll be having your bath water. But I thought I'd just like to tell you how . . .' But the Maremmano, which had recovered by this time from its surprise of a moment since, suddenly bounded, growling, up the road. The old gentleman tried to hold the beast, strained at the leash, tottered unsteadily, then gave way and allowed himself to be dragged off. '. . . how sorry I am,' he went on, as he receded from me, 'that this little misunderstanding . . .' But it was no use. 'Good-bye.' He smiled politely, made a little deprecating gesture, as though he had suddenly remembered a pressing engagement, and had no time to explain what it was. 'Good-bye.' He took off his hat and abandoned himself completely to the dog.

A week later the water really did begin to flow, and the day after our first bath Signora Bondi, dressed in dove-grey satin and wearing all her pearls, came to call.

'Is it peace, now?' she asked, with a charming frankness, as she shook hands.

We assured her that, so far as we were concerned, it certainly was.

'But why *did* you write me such dreadfully rude letters?' she said, turning on me a reproachful glance that ought to have moved the most ruthless malefactor to contrition. 'And then that writ. How *could* you? To a lady. . . .'

I mumbled something about the pump and our wanting baths.

'But how could you expect me to listen to you while you were in that mood? Why didn't you set about it differently—politely, charmingly?' She smiled at me and dropped her fluttering eyelids.

I thought it best to change the conversation. It is disagreeable, when one is in the right, to be made to appear in the wrong.

A few weeks later we had a letter—duly registered and by express messenger—in which the Signora asked us whether we proposed to renew our lease (which was only for six months), and notifying us that, if we did, the rent would be raised twenty-five per cent, in consideration of the improvements which had been carried out. We thought ourselves lucky, at the end of much bargaining, to get the lease renewed for a whole year with an increase in the rent of only fifteen per cent.

It was chiefly for the sake of the view that we put up with these intolerable extortions. But we had found other reasons, after a few days' residence, for liking the house. Of these the most cogent was that, in the peasant's youngest child, we had discovered what seemed the perfect playfellow for our own small boy. Between little Guido—for that was his name—and the youngest of his brothers and sisters there was a gap of six or seven years. His two elder brothers worked with their father in the fields; since the time of the mother's death, two or three years before we knew them, the eldest sister had ruled the house, and the younger, who had just left school, helped her and in between-whiles kept an eye on Guido, who by this time, however, needed very little looking after; for he was between six and seven years old and as precocious, self-assured, and responsible as the children of the poor, left as they are to themselves almost from the time they can walk, generally are.

Though fully two and a half years older than little Robin—and at that age thirty months are crammed with half a lifetime's experience—Guido took no undue advantage of his superior intelligence and strength. I have never seen a child more patient, tolerant, and untyrannical. He never laughed at Robin for his clumsy efforts to imitate his own prodigious feats; he did not tease or bully, but helped his small companion when he was in difficulties and explained when he could not understand. In return, Robin adored him, regarded him as the model and perfect Big Boy, and slavishly imitated him in every way he could.

These attempts of Robin's to imitate his companion were often exceedingly ludicrous. For by an obscure psychological law, words and actions in themselves quite serious became comic as soon as they are copied; and the more accurately, if the imitation is a deliberate parody, the funnier—for an overloaded imitation of someone we know does not make us laugh so much as one that is almost indistinguishably like the original. The bad imitation is only ludicrous when it is a piece of sincere and earnest flattery which does not quite come off. Robin's imitations were mostly of this kind. His heroic and unsuccessful attempts to perform the feats of strength and skill, which Guido could do with ease, were exquisitely comic. And his careful, long-drawn imitations of Guido's habits and mannerisms were no less amusing. Most ludicrous of all, because most earnestly undertaken and most incongruous in the imitator, were Robin's impersonations of Guido in the pensive mood. Guido was a thoughtful child, given to brooding and sudden abstractions. One would find him sitting in a corner by himself, chin in hand, elbow on knee, plunged, to all appearances, in the profoundest meditation. And sometimes, even in the midst of his play, he would suddenly break off, to stand, his hands behind his back, frowning and staring at the ground. When this happened, Robin became overawed and a little disquieted. In a puzzled silence he looked at his companion. 'Guido,' he would say softly, 'Guido.' But Guido was generally too much preoccupied to answer; and Robin, not venturing to insist, would creep near him, and throwing himself as nearly as possible into Guido's attitude—standing Napoleonically, his hands clasped behind him, or sitting in the posture of Michelangelo's Lorenzo the Magnificent—would try to meditate too.

Every few seconds he would turn his bright blue eyes towards the elder child to see whether he was doing it quite right. But at the end of a minute he began to grow impatient; meditation wasn't his strong point. 'Guido,' he called again and, louder, 'Guido!' And he would take him by the hand and try to pull him away. Sometimes Guido roused himself from his reverie and went back to the interrupted game. Sometimes he paid no attention. Melancholy, perplexed, Robin had to take himself off to play by himself. And Guido would go on sitting or standing there, quite still; and his eyes, if one looked into them, were beautiful in their grave and pensive calm.

They were large eyes, set far apart and, what was strange in a dark-haired Italian child, of a luminous pale blue-grey colour. They were not always grave and calm, as in these pensive moments. When he was playing, when he talked or laughed, they lit up; and the surface of those clear, pale lakes of thought seemed, as it were, to be shaken into brilliant sun-flashing ripples. Above those eyes was a beautiful forehead, high and steep and domed in a curve that was like the subtle curve of a rose petal. The nose was straight, the chin small and rather pointed, the mouth drooped a little sadly at the corners.

I have a snapshot of the two children sitting together on the parapet of the terrace. Guido sits almost facing the camera, but looking a little to one side and downwards; his hands are crossed in his lap and his expression, his attitude are thoughtful, grave, and meditative. It is Guido in one of those moods of abstraction into which he would pass even at the height of laughter and play—quite suddenly and completely, as though he had all at once taken it into his head to go away and had left the silent and beautiful body behind, like an empty house, to wait for his return. And by his side sits little Robin, turning to look up at him, his face half averted from the camera, but the curve of his cheek showing that he is laughing; one little raised hand is caught at the top of a gesture, the other clutches at Guido's sleeve, as though he were urging him to come away and play. And the legs dangling from the parapet have been seen by the blinking instrument in the midst of an impatient wriggle; he is on the point of slipping down and running off to play hide-and-seek in the garden. All the essential characteristics of both the children are in that little snapshot.

'If Robin were not Robin,' Elizabeth used to say, 'I could almost wish he were Guido.'

And even at that time, when I took no particular interest in the child, I agreed with her. Guido seemed to me one of the most charming little boys I had ever seen.

We were not alone in admiring him. Signora Bondi when, in those cordial intervals between our quarrels, she came to call, was constantly speaking of him. 'Such a beautiful, beautiful child!' she would exclaim with enthusiasm. 'It 's really a waste that he should belong to peasants who can't afford to dress him properly. If he were mine, I should put him into black velvet; or little white knickers and a white knitted silk jersey with a red line at the collar and cuffs; or perhaps a white sailor suit would be pretty. And in winter a little fur coat, with a squirrel skin cap, and possibly Russian boots . . .' Her imagination was running away with her. 'And I 'd let his hair grow, like a page's, and have it just curled up a little at the tips. And a straight fringe across his forehead. Every one would turn round and stare after us if I took him out with me in Via Tornabuoni.'

What you want, I should have liked to tell her, is not a child: it 's a clockwork doll or a performing monkey. But I did not say so—partly because I could not think of the Italian for a clock-work doll and partly because I did not want to risk having the rent raised another fifteen per cent.

'Ah, if only I had a little boy like that!' She sighed and modestly dropped her eyelids. 'I adore children. I sometimes think of adopting one—that is, if my husband would allow it.'

I thought of the poor old gentleman being dragged along at the heels of his big white dog and inwardly smiled.

'But I don't know if he would,' the Signora was continuing, 'I don't know if he would.' She was silent for a moment, as though considering a new idea.

A few days later, when we were sitting in the garden after luncheon, drinking our coffee, Guido's father, instead of passing with a nod and the usual cheerful good day, halted in front of us and began to talk. He was a fine handsome man, not very tall, but well proportioned, quick and elastic in his movements, and full of life. He had a thin brown face, featured like a Roman's and lit by a pair of the most intelligent-looking grey eyes I ever saw. They exhibited almost too much intelligence when, as not infrequently happened, he was trying, with an assumption of perfect frankness and a childlike innocence, to take one in or get something out of one. Delighting in itself, the intelligence shone there mischievously. The face might be ingenuous, impassive, almost imbecile in its expression; but the eyes on these occasions gave him completely away. One knew, when they glittered like that, that one would have to be careful.

To-day, however, there was no dangerous light in them. He wanted nothing out of us, nothing of any value—only advice, which is a commodity, he knew, that most people are only too happy to part with. But he wanted advice on what was, for us, rather a delicate subject: on Signora Bondi. Carlo had often complained to us about her. The old man is good, he told us, very good and kind indeed. Which meant, I dare say, among other things, that he could easily be swindled. But his wife . . . Well, the woman was a beast. And he would tell us stories of her insatiable rapacity: she was always claiming more than the half of the produce which, by the laws of the metayage system, was the proprietor's due. He complained of her suspiciousness: she was for ever accusing him of sharp practices, of downright stealing—him, he struck his breast, the soul of honesty. He complained of her short-sighted avarice: she wouldn't spend enough on manure, wouldn't buy him another cow, wouldn't have electric light installed in the stables. And we had sympathized, but cautiously, without expressing too strong an opinion on the subject. The Italians are wonderfully non-committal in their speech; they will give nothing away to an interested person until they are quite certain that it is right and necessary and, above all, safe to do so. We had lived long enough among them to imitate their caution. What we said to Carlo would be sure, sooner or later, to get back to Signora Bondi. There was nothing to be gained by unnecessarily embittering our relations with the lady—only another fifteen per cent, very likely, to be lost.

To-day he wasn't so much complaining as feeling perplexed. The Signora had sent for him, it seemed, and asked him how he would like it if she were to make an offer—it was all very hypothetical in the cautious Italian style—to adopt little Guido. Carlo's first instinct had been to say that he wouldn't like it at all. But an answer like that would have been too coarsely committal. He had preferred to say that he would think about it. And now he was asking for our advice.

Do what you think best, was what in effect we replied. But we gave it distantly but distinctly to be understood that we didn't think that Signora Bondi would make a very good foster-mother for the child. And Carlo was inclined to agree. Besides, he was very fond of the boy.

'But the thing is,' he concluded rather gloomily, 'that if she has really set her heart on getting hold of the child, there 's nothing she won't do to get him—nothing.'

He too, I could see, would have liked the physicists to start on unemployed childless women of sanguine temperament before they tried to tackle the atom. Still, I reflected, as I watched him striding away along the terrace, singing powerfully from a brazen gullet as he went, there was force there, there was life enough in those elastic limbs, behind those bright grey eyes, to put up a good fight even against the accumulated vital energies of Signora Bondi.

It was a few days after this that my gramophone and two or three boxes of records arrived from England. They were a great comfort to us on the hilltop, providing as they did the only thing in which that spiritually fertile solitude—otherwise a perfect Swiss Family Robinson's island—was lacking: music. There is not much music to be heard nowadays in Florence. The times when Dr. Burney could tour through Italy, listening to an unending succession of new operas, symphonies, quartets, cantatas, are gone. Gone are the days when a learned musician, inferior only to the Reverend Father Martini of Bologna, could admire what the peasants sang and the strolling players thrummed and scraped on their instruments. I have travelled for weeks through the peninsula and hardly heard a note that was not *Salome* or the Fascists' song. Rich in nothing else that makes life agreeable or even supportable, the northern metropolises are rich in music. That is perhaps the only inducement that a reasonable man can find for living there. The other attractions—organized gaiety, people, miscellaneous conversation, the social pleasures—what are those, after all, but an expense of spirit that buys nothing in return? And then the cold, the darkness, the mouldering dirt, the damp and squalor. . . . No, where there is no necessity that retains, music can be the only inducement. And that, thanks to the ingenious Edison, can now be taken about in a box and unpacked in whatever solitude one chooses to visit. One can live at Benin, or Nuneaton, or Tozeur in the Sahara, and still hear Mozart quartets, and selections from the Well-Tempered Clavichord, and the Fifth Symphony, and the Brahms clarinet quintet, and motets by Palestrina.

Carlo, who had gone down to the station with his mule and cart to fetch the packing-case, was vastly interested in the machine.

'One will hear some music again,' he said, as he watched me unpacking the gramophone and the disks. 'It is difficult to do much oneself.'

Still, I reflected, he managed to do a good deal. On warm nights we used to hear him, where he sat at the door of his house, playing his guitar and softly singing; the eldest boy shrilled out the melody on the mandoline, and sometimes the whole family would join in, and the darkness would be filled with their passionate, throaty singing. Piedigrotta songs they mostly sang; and the voices drooped slurringly from note to note, lazily climbed or jerked themselves with sudden sobbing emphases from one tone to another. At a distance and under the stars the effect was not unpleasing.

'Before the War,' he went on, 'in normal times' (and Carlo had a hope, even a belief, that the normal times were coming back and that life would soon be as cheap and easy as it had been in the days before the flood), 'I used to go and listen to the operas at the Politeama. Ah, they were magnificent. But it costs five lire now to get in.'

'Too much,' I agreed.

'Have you got *Trovatore?*' he asked.

I shook my head.

'*Rigoletto?*'

'I 'm afraid not.'

'*Bohème? Fanciulla del West? Pagliacci?*'

I had to go on disappointing him.

'Not even *Norma?* Or the *Barbiere?*'

I put on Battistini in *La ci darem* out of *Don Giovanni.* He agreed that the singing was good; but I could see that he didn't much like the music. Why not? He found it difficult to explain.

'It 's not like *Pagliacci,*' he said at last.

'Not palpitating?' I suggested, using a word with which I was sure he would be familiar; for it occurs in every Italian political speech and patriotic leading article.

'Not palpitating,' he agreed.

And I reflected that it is precisely by the difference between *Pagliacci* and *Don Giovanni,* between the palpitating and the non-palpitating, that modern musical taste is separated from the old. The corruption of the best, I thought, is the worst. Beethoven taught music to palpitate with his intellectual and spiritual passion. It has gone on palpitating ever since, but with the passion of inferior men. Indirectly, I thought, Beethoven is responsible for *Parsifal*, *Pagliacci*, and the *Poem of Fire*; still more indirectly for *Samson and Delilah* and *Ivy, cling to me.* Mozart's melodies may be brilliant, memorable, infectious; but they don't palpitate, don't catch you between wind and water, don't send the listener off into erotic ecstasies.

Carlo and his elder children found my gramophone, I am afraid, rather a disappointment. They were too polite, however, to say so openly; they merely ceased, after the first day or two, to take any interest in the machine and the music it played. They preferred the guitar and their own singing.

Guido, on the other hand, was immensely interested. And he liked, not the cheerful dance tunes, to whose sharp rhythms our little Robin loved to go stamping round and round the room, pretending that he was a whole regiment of soldiers, but the genuine stuff. The first record he heard, I remember, was that of the slow movement of Bach's Concerto in D Minor for two violins. That was the disk I put on the turntable as soon as Carlo had left me. It seemed to me, so to speak, the most musical piece of music with which I could refresh my long-parched mind—the coolest and clearest of all draughts. The movement had just got under way and was beginning to unfold its pure and melancholy beauties in accordance with the laws of the most exacting intellectual logic, when the two children, Guido in front and little Robin breathlessly following, came clattering into the room from the loggia.

Guido came to a halt in front of the gramophone and stood there, motionless, listening. His pale blue-grey eyes opened themselves wide; making a little nervous gesture that I had often noticed in him before, he plucked at his lower lip with his thumb and forefinger. He must have taken a deep breath; for I noticed that, after listening for a few seconds, he sharply expired and drew in a fresh gulp of air. For an instant he looked at me—a questioning, astonished, rapturous look—gave a little laugh that ended in a kind of nervous shudder, and turned back towards the source of the incredible sounds. Slavishly imitating his elder comrade, Robin had also taken up his stand in front of the gramophone, and in exactly the same position, glancing at Guido from time to time to make sure that he was doing everything, down to plucking at his lip, in the correct way. But after a minute or so he became bored.

'Soldiers,' he said, turning to me; 'I want soldiers. Like in London.' He remembered the rag-time and the jolly marches round and round the room.

I put my fingers to my lips. 'Afterwards,' I whispered.

Robin managed to remain silent and still for perhaps another twenty seconds. Then he seized Guido by the arm, shouting: 'Vieni, Guido! Soldiers. Soldati. Vieni giuocare soldati.'

It was then, for the first time, that I saw Guido impatient. 'Vai!' he whispered angrily, slapped at Robin's clutching hand and pushed him roughly away. And he leaned a little closer to the instrument, as though to make up by yet intenser listening for what the interruption had caused him to miss.

Robin look at him, astonished. Such a thing had never happened before. Then he burst out crying and came to me for consolation.

When the quarrel was made up—and Guido was sincerely repentant, was as nice as he knew how to be when the music had stopped and his mind was free to think of Robin once more—I asked him how he liked the music. He said he thought it was beautiful. But *bello* in Italian is too vague a word, too easily and frequently uttered, to mean very much.

'What did you like best?' I insisted. For he had seemed to enjoy it so much that I was curious to find out what had really impressed him.

He was silent for a moment, pensively frowning. 'Well,' he said at last, 'I liked the bit that went like this.' And he hummed a long phrase. 'And then there 's the other thing singing at the same time—but what are those things,' he interrupted himself, 'that sing like that?'

'They 're called violins,' I said.

'Violins.' He nodded. 'Well, the other violin goes like this.' He hummed again. 'Why can't one sing both at once? And what is in that box? What makes it make that noise?' The child poured out his questions.

I answered him as best I could, showing him the little spirals on the disk, the needle, the diaphragm. I told him to remember how the string of the guitar trembled when one plucked it; sound is a shaking in the air, I told him, and I tried to explain how those shakings get printed on the black disk. Guido listened to me very gravely, nodding from time to time. I had the impression that he understood perfectly well everything I was saying.

By this time, however, poor Robin was so dreadfully bored that in pity for him I had to send the two children out into the garden to play. Guido went obediently; but I could see that he would have preferred to stay indoors and listen to more music. A little while later, when I looked out, he was hiding in the dark recesses of the big bay tree, roaring like a lion, and Robin, laughing, but a little nervously, as though he were afraid that the horrible noise might possibly turn out, after all, to be the roaring of a real lion, was beating the bush with a stick, and shouting: 'Come out, come out! I want to shoot you.'

After lunch, when Robin had gone upstairs for his afternoon sleep, he reappeared. 'May I listen to the music now?' he asked. And for an hour he sat there in front of the instrument, his head cocked slightly on one side, listening while I put on one disk after another.

Thenceforward he came every afternoon. Very soon he knew all my library of records, had his preferences and dislikes, and could ask for what he wanted by humming the principal theme.

'I don't like that one,' he said of Strauss's *Till Eulen Spiegel*. 'It 's like what we sing in our house. Not really like, you know. But somehow rather like, all the same. You understand?' He looked at us perplexedly and appealingly, as though begging us to understand what he meant and so save him from going on explaining. We nodded. Guido went on. 'And then,' he said, 'the end doesn't seem to come properly out of the beginning. It 's not like the one you played the first time.' He hummed a bar or two from the slow movement of Bach's D Minor Concerto.

'It isn't,' I suggested, 'like saying: All little boys like playing. Guido is a little boy. Therefore Guido likes playing.'

He frowned. 'Yes, perhaps that 's it,' he said at last. 'The one you played first is more like that. But, you know,' he added, with an excessive regard for truth, 'I don't like playing as much as Robin does.'

Wagner was among his dislikes; so was Debussy. When I played the record of one of Debussy's Arabesques, he said: 'Why does he say the same thing over and over again? He ought to say something new, or go on, or make the thing grow. Can't he think of anything different?' But he was less censorious about the *Après-Midi d'un Faune*. 'The things have beautiful voices,' he said.

Mozart overwhelmed him with delight. The duet from *Don Giovanni*, which his father had found insufficiently palpitating, enchanted Guido. But he preferred the quartets and the orchestral pieces.

'I like music,' he said, 'better than singing.'

Most people, I reflected, like singing better than music; are more interested in the executant than in what he executes, and find the impersonal orchestra less moving than the soloist. The touch of the pianist is the human touch, and the soprano's high C is the personal note. It is for the sake of this touch, that note, that audiences fill the concert halls.

Guido, however, preferred music. True, he liked *La ci darem*; he liked *Deh vieni alla finestra*; he thought *Che soave zefiretto* so lovely that almost all our concerts had to begin with it. But he preferred the other things. The *Figaro* overture was one of his favourites. There is a passage not far from the beginning of the piece, where the first violins suddenly go rocketing up into the heights of loveliness; as the music approached that point, I used always to see a smile developing and gradually brightening on Guido's face, and when, punctually, the thing happened, he clapped his hands and laughed aloud with pleasure.

On the other side of the same disk, it happened, was recorded Beethoven's *Egmont* overture. He liked that almost better than *Figaro.*

'It has more voices,' he explained. And I was delighted by the acuteness of the criticism; for it is precisely in the richness of its orchestration that *Egmont* goes beyond *Figaro.*

But what stirred him almost more than anything was the *Coriolan* overture. The third movement of the Fifth Symphony, the second movement of the Seventh, the slow movement of the Emperor Concerto—all these things ran it pretty close. But none excited him so much as *Coriolan.* One day he made me play it three or four times in succession; then he put it away.

'I don't think I want to hear that any more,' he said.

'Why not?'

'It 's too . . . too——' He hesitated. 'Too big,' he said at last. 'I don't really understand it. Play me the one that goes like this.' He hummed the phrase from the D Minor Concerto.

'Do you like that one better?' I asked.

He shook his head. 'No, it 's not that exactly. But it 's easier.'

'Easier?' It seemed to me rather a queer word to apply to Bach.

'I understand it better.'

One afternoon, while we were in the middle of our concert, Signora Bondi was ushered in. She began at once to be overwhelmingly affectionate towards the child; kissed him, patted his head, paid him the most outrageous compliments on his appearance. Guido edged away from her.

'And do you like music?' she asked.

The child nodded.

'I think he has a gift,' I said. 'At any rate, he has a wonderful ear and a power of listening and criticizing such as I 've never met with in a child of that age. We 're thinking of hiring a piano for him to learn on.'

A moment later I was cursing myself for my undue frankness in praising the boy. For Signora Bondi began immediately to protest that, if she could have the upbringing of the child, she would give him the best masters, bring out his talent, make an accomplished *maestro* of him—and, on the way, an infant prodigy. And at that moment, I am sure, she saw herself sitting maternally, in pearls and black satin, in the lea of the huge Steinway, while an angelic Guido, dressed like little Lord Fauntleroy, rattled out Liszt and Chopin, to the loud delight of a thronged auditorium. She saw the bouquets and all the elaborate floral tributes, heard the clapping and the few well-chosen words with which the veteran *maestri*, touched almost to tears, would hail the coming of the little genius. It became more than ever important for her to acquire the child.

'You 've sent her away fairly ravening,' said Elizabeth, when Signora Bondi had gone. 'Better tell her next time that you made a mistake, and that the boy 's got no musical talent whatever.'

In due course, the piano arrived. After giving him the minimum of preliminary instruction, I let Guido loose on it. He began by picking out for himself the melodies he had heard, reconstructing the harmonies in which they were embedded. After a few lessons, he understood the rudiments of musical notation and could read a simple passage at sight, albeit very slowly. The whole process of reading was still strange to him; he had picked up his letters somehow, but nobody had yet taught him to read whole words and sentences.

I took occasion, next time I saw Signora Bondi, to assure her that Guido had disappointed me. There was nothing in his musical talent, really. She professed to be very sorry to hear it; but I could see that she didn't for a moment believe me. Probably she thought that we were after the child too, and wanted to bag the infant prodigy for ourselves, before she could get in her claim, thus depriving her of what she regarded almost as her feudal right. For, after all, weren't they her peasants? If any one was to profit by adopting the child it ought to be herself.

Tactfully, diplomatically, she renewed her negotiations with Carlo. The boy, she put it to him, had genius. It was the foreign gentleman who had told her so, and he was the sort of man, clearly, who knew about such things. If Carlo would let her adopt the child, she'd have him trained. He'd become a great *maestro* and get engagements in the Argentine and the United States, in Paris and London. He'd earn millions and millions. Think of Caruso, for example. Part of the millions, she explained, would of course come to Carlo. But before they began to roll in, those millions, the boy would have to be trained. But training was very expensive. In his own interest, as well as in that of his son, he ought to let her take charge of the child. Carlo said he would think it over, and again applied to us for advice. We suggested that it would be best in any case to wait a little and see what progress the boy made.

He made, in spite of my assertions to Signora Bondi, excellent progress. Every afternoon, while Robin was asleep, he came for his concert and his lesson. He was getting along famously with his reading; his small fingers were acquiring strength and agility. But what to me was more interesting was that he had begun to make up little pieces on his own account. A few of them I took down as he played them and I have them still. Most of them, strangely enough, as I thought them, are canons. He had a passion for canons. When I explained to him the principles of the form he was enchanted.

'It is beautiful,' he said, with admiration. 'Beautiful, beautiful. And so easy!'

Again the word surprised me. The canon is not, after all, so conspicuously simple. Thenceforward he spent most of his time at the piano in working out little canons for his own amusement. They were often remarkably ingenious. But in the invention of other kinds of music he did not show himself so fertile as I had hoped. He composed and harmonized one or two solemn little airs like hymn tunes, with a few sprightlier pieces in the spirit of the military march. They were extraordinary, of course, as being the inventions of a child. But a great many children can do extraordinary things; we are all geniuses up to the age of ten. But I had hoped that Guido was a child who was going to be a genius at forty; in which case what was extraordinary for an ordinary child was not extraordinary enough for him. 'He 's hardly a Mozart,' we agreed, as we played his little pieces over. I felt, it must be confessed, almost aggrieved. Anything less than a Mozart, it seemed to me, was hardly worth thinking about.

He was not a Mozart. No. But he was somebody, as I was to find out, quite as extraordinary. It was one morning in the early summer that I made the discovery. I was sitting in the warm shade of our westward-facing balcony, working. Guido and Robin were playing in the little enclosed garden below. Absorbed in my work, it was only, I suppose, after the silence had prolonged itself a considerable time that I became aware that the children were making remarkably little noise. There was no shouting, no running about; only a quiet talking. Knowing by experience that when children are quiet it generally means that they are absorbed in some delicious mischief, I got up from my chair and looked over the balustrade to see what they were doing. I expected to catch them dabbling in water, making a bonfire, covering themselves with tar. But what I actually saw was Guido, with a burnt stick in his hand, demonstrating on the smooth paving-stones of the path, that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides.

Kneeling on the floor, he was drawing with the point of his blackened stick on the flagstones. And Robin, kneeling imitatively beside him, was growing, I could see, rather impatient with this very slow game.

'Guido,' he said. But Guido paid no attention. Pensively frowning, he went on with his diagram. 'Guido!' The younger child bent down and then craned round his neck so as to look up into Guido's face. 'Why don't you draw a train?'

'Afterwards,' said Guido. 'But I just want to show you this first. It 's *so* beautiful,' he added cajolingly.

'But I want a train,' Robin persisted.

'In a moment. Do just wait a moment.' The tone was almost imploring. Robin armed himself with renewed patience. A minute later Guido had finished both his diagrams.

'There!' he said triumphantly, and straightened himself up to look at them. 'Now I 'll explain.'

And he proceeded to prove the theorem of Pythagoras—not in Euclid's way, but by the simpler and more satisfying method which was, in all probability, employed by Pythagoras himself. He had drawn a square and dissected it, by a pair of crossed perpendiculars, into two squares and two equal rectangles. The equal rectangles he divided up by their diagonals into four equal right-angled triangles. The two squares are then seen to be the squares on the two sides of any one of these triangles other than the hypotenuse. So much for the first diagram. In the next he took the four right-angled triangles into which the rectangles had been divided and rearranged them round the original square so that their right angles filled the corners of the square, the hypotenuses looked inwards, and the greater and less sides of the triangles were in continuation along the sides of the square (which are each equal to the sum of these sides). In this way the original square is redissected into four right-angled triangles and the square on the hypotenuse. The four triangles are equal to the two rectangles of the original dissection. Therefore the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the two squares—the squares on the other two sides—into which, with the rectangles, the original square was first dissected.

In very untechnical language, but clearly and with a relentless logic, Guido expounded his proof. Robin listened, with an expression on his bright, freckled face of perfect incomprehension.

'Treno,' he repeated from time to time. 'Treno. Make a train.'

'In a moment,' Guido implored. 'Wait a moment. But do just look at this. *Do.*' He coaxed and cajoled. 'It 's so beautiful. It 's so easy.'

So easy. . . . The theorem of Pythagoras seemed to explain for me Guido's musical predilections. It was not an infant Mozart we had been cherishing; it was a little Archimedes with, like most of his kind, an incidental musical twist.

'Treno, treno!' shouted Robin, growing more and more restless as the exposition went on. And when Guido insisted on going on with his proof, he lost his temper. 'Cattivo Guido,' he shouted, and began to hit out at him with his fists.

'All right,' said Guido resignedly. 'I 'll make a train.' And with his stick of charcoal he began to scribble on the stones.

I looked on for a moment in silence. It was not a very good train. Guido might be able to invent for himself and prove the theorem of Pythagoras; but he was not much of a draughtsman.

'Guido!' I called. The two children turned and looked up. 'Who taught you to draw those squares?' It was conceivable, of course, that somebody might have taught him.

'Nobody.' He shook his head. Then, rather anxiously, as though he were afraid there might be something wrong about drawing squares, he went on to apologize and explain. 'You see,' he said, 'it seemed to me so beautiful. Because those squares'—he pointed at the two small squares in the first figure—'are just as big as this one.' And, indicating the square on the hypotenuse in the second diagram, he looked up at me with a deprecating smile.

I nodded. 'Yes, it's very beautiful,' I said; 'it's very beautiful indeed.'

An expression of delighted relief appeared on his face; he laughed with pleasure. 'You see, it's like this,' he went on, eager to initiate me into the glorious secret he had discovered. 'You cut these two long squares'—he meant the rectangles—'into two slices. And then there are four slices, all just the same, because, because—oh, I ought to have said that before—because these long squares are the same, because those lines, you see . . .'

'But I want a train,' protested Robin.

Leaning on the rail of the balcony, I watched the children below. I thought of the extraordinary thing I had just seen and of what it meant.

I thought of the vast differences between human beings. We classify men by the colour of their eyes and hair, the shape of their skulls. Would it not be more sensible to divide them up into intellectual species? There would be even wider gulfs between the extreme mental types than between a Bushman and a Scandinavian. This child, I thought, when he grows up, will be to me, intellectually, what a man is to a dog. And there are other men and women who are, perhaps, almost as dogs to me.

Perhaps the men of genius are the only true men. In all the history of the race there have been only a few thousand real men. And the rest of us—what are we? Teachable animals. Without the help of the real men, we should have found out almost nothing at all. Almost all the ideas with which we are familiar could never have occurred to minds like ours. Plant the seeds there and they will grow; but our minds could never spontaneously have generated them.

There have been whole nations of dogs, I thought; whole epochs in which no Man was born. From the dull Egyptians the Greeks took crude experience and rules of thumb and made sciences. More than a thousand years passed before Archimedes had a comparable successor. There has been only one Buddha, one Jesus, only one Bach that we know of, one Michelangelo.

Is it by a mere chance, I wondered, that a Man is born from time to time? What causes a whole constellation of them to come contemporaneously into being and from out of a single people? Taine thought that Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael were born when they were because the time was ripe for great painters and the Italian scene congenial. In the mouth of a rationalizing nineteenth-century Frenchman the doctrine is strangely mystical; it may be none the less true for that. But what of those born out of time? Blake, for example. What of those?

This child, I thought, has had the fortune to be born at a time when he will be able to make good use of his capacities. He will find the most elaborate analytical methods lying ready to his hand; he will have a prodigious experience behind him. Suppose him born while Stonehenge was building; he might have spent a lifetime discovering the rudiments, guessing darkly where now he might have had a chance of proving. Born at the time of the Norman Conquest, he would have had to wrestle with all the preliminary difficulties created by an inadequate symbolism; it would have taken him long years, for example, to learn the art of dividing MMMCCCCLXXXVIII by MCMXIX. In five years, nowadays, he will learn what it took generations of Men to discover.

And I thought of the fate of all the Men born so hopelessly out of time that they could achieve little or nothing of value. Beethoven born in Greece, I thought, would have had to be content to play thin melodies on the flute or lyre; in those intellectual surroundings it would hardly have been possible for him to imagine the nature of harmony.

From drawing trains, the children in the garden below had gone on to playing trains. They were trotting round and round; with blown round cheeks and pouting mouth, like the cherubic symbol of a wind, Robin puff-puffed, and Guido, holding the skirt of his smock, shuffled behind him, tooting.

They ran forward, backed, stopped at imaginary stations, shunted, roared over bridges, crashed through tunnels, met with occasional collisions and derailments. The young Archimedes seemed to be just as happy as the little tow-headed barbarian. A few minutes ago he had been busy with the theorem of Pythagoras. Now, tooting indefatigably along imaginary rails, he was perfectly content to shuffle backwards and forwards among the flower-beds, between the pillars of the loggia, in and out of the dark tunnels of the laurel tree. The fact that one is going to be Archimedes does not prevent one from being an ordinary cheerful child meanwhile. I thought of this strange talent distinct and separate from the rest of the mind, independent, almost, of experience. The typical child-prodigies are musical and mathematical; the other talents ripen slowly under the influence of emotional experience and growth. Till he was thirty Balzac gave proof of nothing but ineptitude; but at four the young Mozart was already a musician, and some of Pascal's most brilliant work was done before he was out of his teens.

In the weeks that followed, I alternated the daily piano lessons with lessons in mathematics. Hints rather than lessons they were; for I only made suggestions, indicated methods, and left the child himself to work out the ideas in detail. Thus I introduced him to algebra by showing him another proof of the theorem of Pythagoras. In this proof one drops a perpendicular from the right angle on to the hypotenuse, and arguing from the fact that the two triangles thus created are similar to one another and to the original triangle, and that the proportions which their corresponding sides bear to one another are therefore equal, one can show in algebraical form that $c^2+d^2$ (the squares on the other two sides) are equal to $a^2+b^2$ (the squares on the two segments of the hypotenuse) $+2ab$; which last, it is easy to show geometrically, is equal to $(a+b)^2$, or the square on the hypotenuse. Guido was as much enchanted by the rudiments of algebra as he would have been if I had given him an engine worked by steam, with a methylated spirit lamp to heat the boiler; more enchanted, perhaps—for the engine would have got broken, and, remaining always itself, would in any case have lost its charm, while the rudiments of algebra continued to grow and blossom in his mind with an unfailing luxuriance. Every day he made the discovery of something which seemed to him exquisitely beautiful; the new toy was inexhaustible in its potentialities.

In the intervals of applying algebra to the second book of Euclid, we experimented with circles; we stuck bamboos into the parched earth, measured their shadows at different hours of the day, and drew exciting conclusions from our observations. Sometimes, for fun, we cut and folded sheets of paper so as to make cubes and pyramids. One afternoon Guido arrived carrying carefully between his small and rather grubby hands a flimsy dodecahedron.

'È tanto bello!' he said, as he showed us his paper crystal; and when I asked him how he had managed to make it, he merely smiled and said it had been so easy. I looked at Elizabeth and laughed. But it would have been more symbolically to the point, I felt, if I had gone down on all fours, wagged the spiritual outgrowth of my *os coccyx*, and barked my astonished admiration.

It was an uncommonly hot summer. By the beginning of July our little Robin, unaccustomed to these high temperatures, began to look pale and tired; he was listless, had lost his appetite and energy. The doctor advised mountain air. We decided to spend the next ten or twelve weeks in Switzerland. My parting gift to Guido was the first six books of Euclid in Italian. He turned over the pages, looking ecstatically at the figures.

'If only I knew how to read properly,' he said. 'I 'm so stupid. But now I shall really try to learn.'

From our hotel near Grindelwald we sent the child, in Robin's name, various post cards of cows, Alp-horns, Swiss chalets, edelweiss, and the like. We received no answers to these cards; but then we did not expect answers. Guido could not write, and there was no reason why his father or his sisters should take the trouble to write for him. No news, we took it, was good news. And then one day, early in September, there arrived at the hotel a strange letter. The manager had it stuck up on the glass-fronted notice-board in the hall, so that all the guests might see it, and whoever conscientiously thought that it belonged to him might claim it. Passing the board on the way into lunch, Elizabeth stopped to look at it.

'But it must be from Guido,' she said.

I came and looked at the envelope over her shoulder. It was unstamped and black with postmarks. Traced out in pencil, the big uncertain capital letters sprawled across its face. In the first line was written: AL BABBO DI ROBIN, and there followed a travestied version of the name of the hotel and the place. Round the address bewildered postal officials had scrawled suggested emendations. The letter had wandered for a fortnight at least, back and forth across the face of Europe.

'Al Babbo di Robin. To Robin's father.' I laughed. 'Pretty smart of the postmen to have got it here at all.' I went to the manager's office, set forth the justice of my claim to the letter and, having paid the fifty-centime surcharge for the missing stamp, had the case unlocked and the letter given me. We went in to lunch.

'The writing 's magnificent,' we agreed, laughing, as we examined the address at close quarters. 'Thanks to Euclid,' I added. 'That 's what comes of pandering to the ruling passion.'

But when I opened the envelope and looked at its contents I no longer laughed. The letter was brief and almost telegraphical in style. 'Sono dalla Padrona,' it ran, 'Non mi Piace ha Rubato il mio Libro non Voglio Suonare piu Voglio Tornare a Casa Venga Subito Guido.'

'What is it?'

I handed Elizabeth the letter. 'That blasted woman's got hold of him,' I said.

Busts of men in Homburg hats, angels bathed in marble tears extinguishing torches, statues of little girls, cherubs, veiled figures, allegories and ruthless realisms—the strangest and most diverse idols beckoned and gesticulated as we passed. Printed indelibly on tin and embedded in the living rock, the brown photographs looked out, under glass, from the humbler crosses, headstones, and broken pillars. Dead ladies in the cubistic geometrical fashions of thirty years ago—two cones of black satin meeting point to point at the waist, and the arms: a sphere to the elbow, a polished cylinder below—smiled mournfully out of their marble frames; the smiling faces, the white hands, were the only recognizably human things that emerged from the solid geometry of their clothes. Men with black moustaches, men with white beards, young clean-shaven men, stared or averted their gaze to show a Roman profile. Children in their stiff best opened wide their eyes, smiled hopefully in anticipation of the little bird that was to issue from the camera's muzzle, smiled sceptically in the knowledge that it wouldn't, smiled laboriously and obediently because they had been told to. In spiky Gothic cottages of marble the richer dead privately reposed; through grilled doors one caught a glimpse of pale Inconsolables weeping, of distraught Geniuses guarding the secret of the tomb. The less prosperous sections of the majority slept in communities, close-crowded but elegantly housed under smooth continuous marble floors, whose every flagstone was the mouth of a separate grave.

These continental cemeteries, I thought, as Carlo and I made our way among the dead, are more frightful than ours, because these people pay more attention to their dead than we do. That primordial cult of corpses, that tender solicitude for their material well-being, which led the ancients to house their dead in stone, while they themselves lived between wattles and under thatch, still lingers here; persists, I thought, more vigorously than with us. There are a hundred gesticulating statues here for every one in an English graveyard. There are more family vaults, more 'luxuriously appointed' (as they say of liners and hotels) than one would find at home. And embedded in every tombstone there are photographs to remind the powdered bones within what form they will have to resume on the Day of Judgment; beside each are little hanging lamps to burn optimistically on All Souls' Day. To the Man who built the Pyramids they are nearer, I thought, than we.

'If I had known,' Carlo kept repeating, 'if only I had known.' His voice came to me through my reflections as though from a distance. 'At the time he didn't mind at all. How should I have known that he would take it so much to heart afterwards? And she deceived me, she lied to me.'

I assured him yet once more that it wasn't his fault. Though, of course, it was, in part. It was mine too, in part; I ought to have thought of the possibility and somehow guarded against it. And he shouldn't have let the child go, even temporarily and on trial, even though the woman was bringing pressure to bear on him. And the pressure had been considerable. They had worked on the same holding for more than a hundred years, the men of Carlo's family; and now she had made the old man threaten to turn him out. It would be a dreadful thing to leave the place; and besides, another place wasn't so easy to find. It was made quite plain, however, that he could stay if he let her have the child. Only for a little to begin with; just to see how he got on. There would be no compulsion whatever on him to stay if he didn't like it. And it would be all to Guido's advantage; and to his father's, too, in the end. All that the Englishman had said about his not being such a good musician as he had thought at first was obviously untrue—mere jealousy and little-mindedness: the man wanted to take credit for Guido himself, that was all. And the boy, it was obvious, would learn nothing from him. What he needed was a real good professional master.

All the energy that, if the physicists had known their business, would have been driving dynamos, went into this campaign. It began the moment we were out of the house, intensively. She would have more chance of success, the Signora doubtless thought, if we weren't there. And besides, it was essential to take the opportunity when it offered itself and get hold of the child before we could make our bid—for it was obvious to her that we wanted Guido just as much as she did.

Day after day she renewed the assault. At the end of a week she sent her husband to complain about the state of the vines: they were in a shocking condition; he had decided, or very nearly decided, to give Carlo notice. Meekly, shamefacedly, in obedience to higher orders, the old gentleman uttered his threats. Next day Signora Bondi returned to the attack. The *padrone*, she declared, had been in a towering passion; but she 'd do her best, her very best, to mollify him. And after a significant pause she went on to talk about Guido.

In the end Carlo gave in. The woman was too persistent and she held too many trump cards. The child could go and stay with her for a month or two on trial. After that, if he really expressed a desire to remain with her, she could formally adopt him.

At the idea of going for a holiday to the seaside—and it was to the seaside, Signora Bondi told him, that they were going—Guido was pleased and excited. He had heard a lot about the sea from Robin. 'Tanta acqua!' It had sounded almost too good to be true. And now he was actually to go and see this marvel. It was very cheerfully that he parted from his family.

But after the holiday by the sea was over, and Signora Bondi had brought him back to her town house in Florence, he began to be homesick. The Signora, it was true, treated him exceedingly kindly, bought him new clothes, took him out to tea in the Via Tornabuoni and filled him up with cakes, iced strawberryade, whipped cream, and chocolates. But she made him practise the piano more than he liked, and, what was worse, she took away his Euclid, on the score that he wasted too much time with it. And when he said that he wanted to go home, she put him off with promises and excuses and downright lies. She told him that she couldn't take him at once, but that next week, if he were good and worked hard at his piano meanwhile, next week . . . And when the time came she told him that his father didn't want him back. And she redoubled her petting, gave him expensive presents, and stuffed him with yet unhealthier foods. To no purpose. Guido didn't like his new life, didn't want to practise scales, pined for his book, and longed to be back with his brothers and sisters. Signora Bondi, meanwhile, continued to hope that time and chocolates would eventually make the child hers; and to keep his family at a distance, she wrote to Carlo every few days letters which still purported to come from the seaside (she took the trouble to send them to a friend, who posted them back again to Florence), and in which she painted the most charming picture of Guido's happiness.

It was then that Guido wrote his letter to me. Abandoned, as he supposed, by his family—for that they shouldn't take the trouble to come to see him when they were so near was only to be explained on the hypothesis that they really had given him up—he must have looked to me as his last and only hope. And the letter, with its fantastic address, had been nearly a fortnight on its way. A fortnight—it must have seemed hundreds of years; and as the centuries succeeded one another, gradually, no doubt, the poor child became convinced that I too had abandoned him. There was no hope left.

'Here we are,' said Carlo.

I looked up and found myself confronted by an enormous monument. In a kind of grotto hollowed in the flanks of a monolith of grey sandstone, Sacred Love, in bronze, was embracing a funerary urn. And in bronze letters riveted into the stone was a long legend to the effect that the inconsolable Ernesto Bondi had raised this monument to the memory of his beloved wife, Annunziata, as a token of his undying love for one whom, snatched from him by a premature death, he hoped very soon to join beneath this stone. The first Signora Bondi had died in 1912. I thought of the old man leashed to his white dog; he must always, I reflected, have been a most uxorious husband.

'They buried him here.'

We stood there for a long time in silence. I felt the tears coming into my eyes as I thought of the poor child lying there underground. I thought of those luminous grave eyes, and the curve of that beautiful forehead, the droop of the melancholy mouth, of the expression of delight which illumined his face when he learned of some new idea that pleased him, when he heard a piece of music that he liked. And this beautiful small being was dead; and the spirit that inhabited this form, the amazing spirit, that too had been destroyed almost before it had begun to exist.

And the unhappiness that must have preceded the final act, the child's despair, the conviction of his utter abandonment —those were terrible to think of, terrible.

'I think we had better come away now,' I said at last, and touched Carlo on the arm. He was standing there like a blind man, his eyes shut, his face slightly lifted towards the light; from between his closed eyelids the tears welled out, hung for a moment, and trickled down his cheeks. His lips trembled and I could see that he was making an effort to keep them still. 'Come away,' I repeated.

The face which had been still in its sorrow, was suddenly convulsed; he opened his eyes, and through the tears they were bright with a violent anger. 'I shall kill her,' he said, 'I shall kill her. When I think of him throwing himself out, falling through the air . . .' With his two hands he made a violent gesture, bringing them down from over his head and arresting them with a sudden jerk when they were on a level with his breast. 'And then crash.' He shuddered. 'She 's as much responsible as though she had pushed him down herself. I shall kill her.' He clenched his teeth.

To be angry is easier than to be sad, less painful. It is comforting to think of revenge. 'Don't talk like that,' I said. 'It 's no good. It 's stupid. And what would be the point?' He had had those fits before, when grief became too painful and he had tried to escape from it. Anger had been the easiest way of escape. I had had, before this, to persuade him back into the harder path of grief. 'It 's stupid to talk like that,' I repeated, and I led him away through the ghastly labyrinth of tombs, where death seemed more terrible even than it is.

By the time we had left the cemetery, and were walking down from San Miniato towards the Piazzale Michelangelo below, he had become calmer. His anger had subsided again into the sorrow from which it had derived all its strength and its bitterness. In the Piazzale we halted for a moment to look down at the city in the valley below us. It was a day of floating clouds —great shapes, white, golden, and grey; and between them patches of a thin, transparent blue. Its lantern level, almost, with our eyes, the dome of the cathedral revealed itself in all its grandiose lightness, its vastness and aerial strength. On the innumerable brown and rosy roofs of the city the afternoon sunlight lay softly, sumptuously, and the towers were as though varnished and enamelled with an old gold. I thought of all the Men who had lived here and left the visible traces of their spirit and conceived extraordinary things. I thought of the dead child.

*From* LITTLE MEXICAN (1924).

# THE MONOCLE

THE drawing-room was on the first floor. The indistinct, inarticulate noise of many voices floated down the stairs, like the roaring of a distant train. Gregory took off his greatcoat and handed it to the parlour-maid.

'Don't trouble to show me up,' he said. 'I know the way.'

Always so considerate! And yet, for some reason, servants would never do anything for him; they despised and disliked him.

'Don't bother,' he insisted.

The parlour-maid, who was young, with high colours and yellow hair, looked at him, he thought, with silent contempt and walked away. In all probability, he reflected, she had never meant to show him up. He felt humiliated—yet once more.

A mirror hung at the bottom of the stairs. He peered at his image, gave his hair a pat, his tie a straightening touch. His face was smooth and egg-shaped; he had regular features, pale hair, and a very small mouth, with cupid's bow effects in the upper lip. A curate's face. Secretly, he thought himself handsome and was always astonished that more people were not of his opinion.

Gregory mounted the stairs, polishing his monocle as he went. The volume of sound increased. At the landing, where the staircase turned, he could see the open door of the drawing-room. At first he could see only the upper quarter of the tall doorway and, through it, a patch of ceiling; but with every step he saw more—a strip of wall below the cornice, a picture, the heads of people, their whole bodies, their legs and feet. At the penultimate step, he inserted his monocle and replaced his handkerchief in his pocket. Squaring his shoulders, he marched in—almost militarily, he flattered himself. His hostess was standing near the window, at the other side of the room. He advanced towards her, already, though she had not yet seen him, mechanically smiling his greetings. The room was crowded, hot, and misty with cigarette smoke. The noise was almost palpable; Gregory felt as though he were pushing his way laboriously through some denser element. Neck-deep, he waded through noise, still holding preciously above the flood his smile. He presented it, intact, to his hostess.

'Good evening, Hermione.'

'Ah, Gregory. How delightful! Good evening.'

'I adore your dress,' said Gregory, conscientiously following the advice of the enviably successful friend who had told him that one should never neglect to pay a compliment, however manifestly insincere. It wasn't a bad dress, for that matter. But, of course, poor dear Hermione contrived to ruin anything she put on. She was quite malignantly ungraceful and ugly—on purpose, it always seemed to Gregory. 'Too lovely,' he cooed in his rather high voice.

Hermione smiled with pleasure. 'I'm so glad,' she began. But before she could get any further, a loud voice, nasally chanting, interrupted her.

'Behold the monster Polypheme, behold the monster Polypheme,' it quoted, musically, from *Acis and Galatea*.

Gregory flushed. A large hand slapped him in the middle of the back, below the shoulder-blades. His body emitted the drum-like thud of a patted retriever.

'Well, Polypheme'; the voice had ceased to sing and was conversational—'well, Polypheme, how are you?'

'Very well, thanks,' Gregory replied, without looking round. It was that drunken South African brute, Paxton. 'Very well, thanks, Silenus,' he added.

Paxton had called him Polypheme because of his monocle: Polypheme, the one-eyed, wheel-eyed Cyclops. Tit for mythological tat. In future, he would always call Paxton Silenus.

'Bravo!' shouted Paxton. Gregory winced and gasped under a second, heartier slap. 'Pretty high-class, this party. Eh, Hermione? Pretty cultured, what? It isn't every day that a hostess can hear her guests shooting Greco-Roman witticisms at one another. I congratulate you, Hermione.' He put his arm round her waist. 'I congratulate you on us.'

Hermione disengaged herself. 'Don't be a bore, Paxton,' she said impatiently.

Paxton laughed theatrically. 'Ha, ha!' A villain's laugh on the melodrama stage. And it was not his laughter only that was theatrical; his whole person parodied the old-time tragedian. The steep aquiline profile, the deeply sunken eyes, the black hair worn rather long—they were characteristic.

'A thousand apologies': he spoke with an ironical courtesy. 'The poor colonial forgets himself. Boozy and ill-mannered boor!'

'Idiot!' said Hermione, and moved away.

Gregory made a movement to follow her, but Paxton caught him by the sleeve. 'Tell me,' he inquired earnestly, 'why *do* you wear a monocle, Polypheme?'

'Well, if you really want to know,' Gregory answered stiffly, 'for the simple reason that I happen to be short-sighted and astigmatic in the left eye and not in the right.'

'Short-sighted and astigmatic?' the other repeated in tones of affected astonishment. 'Short-sighted and astigmatic? God forgive me—and I thought it was because you wanted to look like a duke on the musical-comedy stage.'

Gregory's laugh was meant to be one of frankly amazed amusement. That any one should have imagined such a thing! Incredible, comical! But a note of embarrassment and discomfort sounded through the amusement. For in reality, of course, Paxton was so devilishly nearly right. Conscious, only too acutely, of his nullity, his provincialism, his lack of successful arrogance, he had made the oculist's diagnosis an excuse for trying to look smarter, more insolent, and impressive. In vain. His eyeglass had done nothing to increase his self-confidence. He was never at ease when he wore it. Monocle-wearers, he decided, are like poets: born, not made. Cambridge had not eradicated the midland grammar-school boy. Cultured, with literary leanings, he was always aware of being the wealthy boot manufacturer's heir. He could not get used to his monocle. Most of the time, in spite of the oculist's recommendations, it dangled at the end of its string, a pendulum when he walked and involving itself messily, when he ate, in soup and tea, in marmalade and the butter. It was only occasionally, in specially favourable circumstances, that Gregory adjusted it to his eye; more rarely still that he kept it, once adjusted, more than a few minutes, a few seconds even, without raising his eyebrow and letting it fall again. And how seldom circumstances *were* favourable to Gregory's eyeglass! Sometimes his environment was too sordid for it, sometimes too smart. To wear a monocle in the presence of the poor, the miserable, the analphabetic is too triumphantly pointed a comment on their lot. Moreover, the poor and the analphabetic have a most deplorable habit of laughing derisively at such symbols of superior caste. Gregory was not laughter-proof; he lacked the lordly confidence and unawareness of nature's monocle-wearers. He did not know how to ignore the poor, to treat them, if it were absolutely necessary to have dealings with them, as machines or domestic animals. He had seen too much of them in the days when his father was alive and had compelled him to take a practical interest in the business. It was the same lack of confidence that made him almost as chary of fixing his eyeglass in the presence of the rich. With them, he never felt quite sure that he had a right to his monocle. He felt himself a parvenu to monocularity. And then there were the intelligent. Their company, too, was most unfavourable to the eyeglass. Eyeglassed, how could one talk of serious things? 'Mozart,' you might say, for example, 'Mozart is so pure, so spiritually beautiful.' It was unthinkable to speak those words with a disk of crystal screwed into your left eye-socket. No, the environment was only too rarely favourable. Still, benignant circumstances did sometimes present themselves. Hermione's half-Bohemian parties, for example. But he had reckoned without Paxton.

Amused, amazed, he laughed. As though by accident, the monocle dropped from his eye. 'Oh, put it back,' cried Paxton, 'put it back, I implore you,' and himself caught the glass, where it dangled over Gregory's stomach, and tried to replace it.

Gregory stepped back; with one hand he pushed away his persecutor, with the other he tried to snatch the monocle from between his fingers. Paxton would not let it go.

'I implore you,' Paxton kept repeating.

'Give it me at once,' said Gregory furiously but in a low voice, so that people should not look round and see the grotesque cause of the quarrel. He had never been so outrageously made a fool of.

Paxton gave it him at last. 'Forgive me,' he said, with mock penitence. 'Forgive a poor drunken colonial who doesn't know what 's done in the best society and what isn't. You must remember I 'm only a boozer, just a poor, hard-working drunkard. You know those registration forms they give you in French hotels? Name, date of birth, and so on. You know?'

Gregory nodded, with dignity.

'Well, when it comes to profession, I always write "ivrogne." That is, when I 'm sober enough to remember the French word. If I 'm too far gone, I just put "Drunkard." They all know English, nowadays.'

'Oh,' said Gregory coldly.

'It 's a capital profession,' Paxton confided. 'It permits you to do whatever you like—any damned thing that comes into your head. Throw your arms round any woman you fancy, tell her the most gross and fantastic impertinences, insult the men, laugh in people's faces—everything 's permitted to the poor drunkard, particularly if he's only a poor colonial and doesn't know any better. *Verb. sap.* Take the hint from me, old boy. Drop the monocle. It 's no damned good. Be a boozer; you 'll have much more fun. Which reminds me that I must go and find some more drink at all costs. I 'm getting sober.'

He disappeared into the crowd. Relieved, Gregory looked round in search of familiar faces. As he looked, he polished his monocle, took the opportunity to wipe his forehead, then put the glass to his eye.

'Excuse me.' He oozed his way insinuatingly between the close-set chairs, passed like a slug ('Excuse me') between the all but contiguous backs of two standing groups. 'Excuse me.' He had seen acquaintances over there, by the fire-place: Ransom and Mary Haig and Miss Camperdown. He joined in their conversation: they were talking about Mrs. Mandragore.

All the old familiar stories about that famous lion-huntress were being repeated. He himself repeated two or three, with suitable pantomime, perfected by a hundred tellings. In the middle of a grimace, at the top of an elaborate gesture, he suddenly saw himself grimacing, gesticulating, he suddenly heard the cadences of his voice repeating, by heart, the old phrases. Why does one come to parties, why on earth? Always the same boring people, the same dull scandal, and one's own same parlour tricks. Each time. But he smirked, he mimed, he fluted and bellowed his story through to the end. His auditors even laughed; it was a success. But Gregory felt ashamed of himself. Ransom began telling the story of Mrs. Mandragore and the Maharajah of Pataliapur. He groaned in the spirit. Why? he asked himself, why, why, why? Behind him, they were talking politics. Still pretending to smile at the Mandragore fable, he listened.

'It 's the beginning of the end,' the politician was saying, prophesying destructions in a loud and cheerful voice.

'"Dear Maharajah"'—Ransom imitated the Mandragore's intense voice, her aimed and yearning gestures—'"if you knew how I *adore* the East."'

'Our unique position was due to the fact that we started the industrial system before any one else. Now, when the rest of the world has followed our example, we find it 's a disadvantage to have started first. All our equipment is old-fash——'

'Gregory,' called Mary Haig, 'what 's your story about the Unknown Soldier?'

'Unknown Soldier?' said Gregory vaguely, trying to catch what was being said behind him.

'The latest arrivals have the latest machinery. It 's obvious. We . . .'

'You know the one. The Mandragore's party; you know.'

'Oh, when she asked us all to tea to meet the Mother of the Unknown Soldier.'

'. . . like Italy,' the politician was saying in his loud, jolly voice. 'In future, we shall always have one or two millions more population than we can employ. Living on the State.'

One or two millions. He thought of the Derby. Perhaps there might be a hundred thousand in that crowd. Ten Derbies, twenty Derbies, all half starved, walking through the streets with brass bands and banners. He let his monocle fall. Must send five pounds to the London Hospital, he thought. Four thousand eight hundred a year. Thirteen pounds a day. Less taxes, of course. Taxes were terrible. Monstrous, sir, monstrous. He tried to feel as indignant about taxes as those old gentlemen who get red in the face when they talk about them. But somehow, he couldn't manage to do it. And after all, taxes were no excuse, no justification. He felt all at once profoundly depressed. Still, he tried to comfort himself, not more than twenty or twenty-five out of the two million could live on his income. Twenty-five out of two millions—it was absurd, derisory! But he was not consoled.

'And the odd thing is'—Ransom was still talking about the Mandragore—'she isn't really in the least interested in her lions. She 'll begin telling you about what Anatole France said to her and then forget in the middle, out of pure boredom, what she 's talking about.'

Oh, God, God, thought Gregory. How often had he heard Ransom making the same reflections on the Mandragore's psychology! How often! He 'd be bringing out that bit about the chimpanzees in half a moment. Gold help us!

'Have you ever watched the chimpanzees at the Zoo?' said Ransom. 'The way they pick up a straw or a banana skin and examine it for a few seconds with a passionate attention.'

He went through a simian pantomime. 'Then, suddenly, get utterly bored, let the thing drop from their fingers and look round vaguely in search of something else. They always remind me of the Mandragore and her guests. The way she begins, earnestly, as though you were the only person in the world; then all at once . . .'

Gregory could bear it no longer. He mumbled something to Miss Camperdown about having seen somebody he must talk to, and disappeared, 'Excuse me,' slug-like, through the crowd. Oh, the misery, the appalling gloom of it all! In a corner he found young Crane and two or three other men with tumblers in their hands.

'Ah, Crane,' he said, 'for God's sake tell me where you got that drink.'

That golden fluid—it seemed the only hope. Crane pointed in the direction of the archway leading into the back drawing-room. He raised his glass without speaking, drank, and winked at Gregory over the top of it. He had a face that looked like an accident. Gregory oozed on through the crowd. 'Excuse me,' he said aloud; but inwardly he was saying, 'God help us.'

At the farther end of the back drawing-room was a table with bottles and glasses. The professional drunkard was sitting on a sofa near by, glass in hand, making personal remarks to himself about all the people who came within earshot.

'Christ!' he was saying, as Gregory came up to the table. 'Christ! Look at that!' *That* was the gaunt Mrs. Labadie in cloth of gold and pearls. 'Christ!' She had pounced on a shy young man entrenched behind the table.

'Tell me, Mr. Foley,' she began, approaching her horse-like face very close to that of the young man and speaking appealingly, 'you who know *all* about mathematics, tell me . . .'

'Is it possible?' exclaimed the professional drunkard. 'In England's green and pleasant land? Ha, ha, ha!' He laughed his melodramatic laugh.

Pretentious fool, thought Gregory. How romantic he thinks himself! The laughing philosopher, what? Drunk because the world isn't good enough for him. Quite the little Faust.

'And Polypheme too,' Paxton soliloquized on, 'funny little Polypheme!' He laughed again. 'The heir to all the ages. Christ!'

With dignity, Gregory poured himself out some whisky and filled up the glass from the siphon—with dignity, with conscious grace and precision, as though he were acting the part of a man who helps himself to whisky and soda on the stage. He took a sip; then elaborately acted the part of one who takes out his handkerchief and blows his nose.

'Don't they make one believe in birth control, all these people,' continued the professional drunkard. 'If only their parents could have had a few intimate words with Stopes! Heigh ho!' He uttered a stylized Shakespearian sigh.

Buffoon, thought Gregory. And the worst is that if one called him one, he 'd pretend that he 'd said so himself, all the time. And so he has, of course, just to be on the safe side. But in reality, it 's obvious, the man thinks of himself as a sort of Musset or up-to-date Byron. A beautiful soul, darkened and embittered by experience. Ugh!

Still pretending to be unaware of the professional boozer's proximity, Gregory went through the actions of the man who sips.

'How *clear* you make it!' Mrs. Labadie was saying, point blank, into the young mathematician's face. She smiled at him; the horse, thought Gregory, has a terribly human expression.

'Well,' said the young mathematician nervously, 'now we come on to Riemann.'

'Riemann!' Mrs. Labadie repeated, with a kind of ecstasy. 'Riemann!' as though the geometrician's soul were in his name.

Gregory wished that there were somebody to talk to, somebody who would relieve him of the necessity of acting the part of unaware indifference before the scrutinizing eyes of Paxton. He leaned against the wall in the attitude of one who falls, all of a sudden, into a brown study. Blankly and pensively, he stared at a point on the opposite wall, high up, just below the ceiling. People must be wondering, he reflected, what he was thinking about. And what was he thinking about? Himself. Vanity, vanity. Oh, the gloom, the misery of it all!

'Polypheme!'

He pretended not to hear.

'Polypheme!' It was a shout this time.

Gregory slightly overacted the part of one who is suddenly aroused from profoundest meditation. He started; blinking, a little dazed, he turned his head.

'Ah, Paxton,' he said. 'Silenus! I hadn't noticed that you were there.'

'Hadn't you?' said the professional drunkard. 'That was damned clever of you. What were you thinking about so picturesquely there?'

'Oh, nothing,' said Gregory, smiling with the modest confusion of the Thinker, caught in the act.

'Just what I imagined,' said Paxton. 'Nothing. Nothing at all. Jesus Christ!' he added for himself.

Gregory's smile was rather sickly. He averted his face and passed once more into meditation. It seemed, in the circumstances, the best thing he could do. Dreamily, as though unconscious of what he was doing, he emptied his glass.

'Crippen!' he heard the professional drunkard muttering. 'It 's like a funeral. Joyless, joyless.'

'Well, Gregory.'

Gregory did another of his graceful starts, his dazed blinkings. He had been afraid, for a moment, that Spiller was going to respect his meditation and not speak to him. That would have been very embarrassing.

'Spiller!' he exclaimed with delight and astonishment. 'My dear chap.' He shook him heartily by the hand.

Square-faced, with a wide mouth and an immense forehead, framed in copious and curly hair, Spiller looked like a Victorian celebrity. His friends declared that he might actually have been a Georgian celebrity but for the fact that he preferred talking to writing.

'Just up for the day,' explained Spiller. 'I couldn't stand another hour of the bloody country. Working all day. No company but my own. I find I bore myself to death.' He helped himself to whisky.

'Jesus! The great man! Ha, ha!' The professional drunkard covered his face with his hands and shuddered violently.

'Do you mean to say you came specially for this?' asked Gregory, waving his hand to indicate the party at large.

'Not specially. Incidentally. I heard that Hermione was giving a party, so I dropped in.'

'Why *does* one go to parties?' said Gregory, unconsciously assuming something of the embittered Byronic manner of the professional drunkard.

'To satisfy the cravings of the herd instinct.' Spiller replied to the rhetorical question without hesitation and with a pontifical air of infallibility. 'Just as one pursues women to satisfy the cravings of the reproductive instinct.' Spiller had an impressive way of making everything he said sound very scientific; it all seemed to come straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak. Vague-minded Gregory found him most stimulating.

'You mean, one goes to parties just in order to be in a crowd?'

'Precisely,' Spiller replied. 'Just to feel the warmth of the herd around one and sniff the smell of one's fellow-humans.' He snuffed the thick, hot air.

'I suppose you must be right,' said Gregory. 'It 's certainly very hard to think of any other reason.'

He looked round the room as though searching for other reasons. And surprisingly he found one: Molly Voles. He had not seen her before; she must have only just arrived.

'I 've got a capital idea for a new paper,' began Spiller.

'Have you?' Gregory did not show much curiosity. How beautiful her neck was, and those thin arms!

'Art, literature, and science,' Spiller continued. 'The idea 's a really modern one. It 's to bring science into touch with the arts and so into touch with life. Life, art, science—all three would gain. You see the notion?'

'Yes,' said Gregory, 'I see.' He was looking at Molly, hoping to catch her eye. He caught it at last, that cool and steady grey eye. She smiled and nodded.

'You like the idea?' asked Spiller.

'I think it 's splendid,' answered Gregory with a sudden warmth that astonished his interlocutor.

Spiller's large severe face shone with pleasure. 'Oh, I 'm glad,' he said, 'I 'm very glad indeed that you like it so much.'

'I think it 's splendid,' said Gregory extravagantly 'Simply splendid.' She had seemed really glad to see him, he thought.

'I was thinking,' Spiller pursued, with a rather elaborate casualness of manner, 'I was thinking you might like to help me start the thing. One could float it comfortably with a thousand pounds of capital.'

The enthusiasm faded out of Gregory's face; it became blank in its clerical roundness. He shook his head. 'If I had a thousand pounds,' he said regretfully. Damn the man! he was thinking. Setting me a trap like that.

'If,' repeated Spiller. 'But, my dear fellow!' He laughed. 'And besides, it 's a safe six per cent investment. I can collect an extraordinarily strong set of contributors, you know.'

Gregory shook his head once more. 'Alas,' he said, 'alas!'

'And what 's more,' insisted Spiller, 'you 'd be a benefactor of society.'

'Impossible.' Gregory was firm; he planted his feet like a donkey and would not be moved. Money was the one thing he never had a difficulty in being firm about.

'But come,' said Spiller, 'come. What 's a thousand pounds to a millionaire like you? You 've got—how much *have* you got?'

Gregory stared him glassily in the eyes.

'Twelve hundred a year,' he said. 'Say fourteen hundred.' He could see that Spiller didn't believe him. Damn the man! Not that he really expected him to believe; but still . . . 'And then there are one's taxes,' he added plaintively, 'and one's contributions to charities.' He remembered that fiver he was going to send to the London Hospital. 'The London Hospital, for example—always short of money.' He shook his head sadly. 'Quite impossible, I 'm afraid.' He thought of all the unemployed; ten Derby crowds, half starved, with banners and brass bands. He felt himself blushing. Damn the man! He was furious with Spiller.

Two voices sounded simultaneously in his ears: the professional drunkard's and another, a woman's—Molly's.

'The succubus!' groaned the professional drunkard. '*Il ne manquait que ça!*'

'Impossible?' said Molly's voice, unexpectedly repeating his latest word. 'What 's impossible?'

'Well——' said Gregory, embarrassed, and hesitated.

It was Spiller who explained.

'Why, of course Gregory can put up a thousand pounds,' said Molly, when she had learned what was the subject at issue. She looked at him indignantly, contemptuously, as though reproaching him for his avarice.

'You know better than I, then,' said Gregory, trying to take the airy jocular line about the matter. He remembered what the enviably successful friend had told him about compliments. 'How lovely you look in that white dress, Molly!' he added, and tempered the jocularity of his smile with a glance that was meant to be at once insolent and tender. 'Too lovely,' he repeated, and put up his monocle to look at her.

'Thank you,' she said, looking back at him unwaveringly. Her eyes were calm and bright. Against that firm and penetrating regard his jocularity, his attempt at insolent tenderness, punctured and crumpled up. He averted his eyes, he let fall his eyeglass. It was a weapon he did not dare or know how to use—it made him look ridiculous. He was like horse-faced Mrs. Labadie flirting coquettishly with her fan.

'I'd like to discuss the question in any case,' he said to Spiller, glad of any excuse to escape from those eyes. 'But I assure you I really can't. . . . Not the whole thousand, at any rate,' he added, feeling despairingly that he had been forced against his will to surrender.

'Molly!' shouted the professional drunkard.

Obediently she went and sat down beside him on the sofa.

'Well, Tom,' she said, and laid her hand on his knee. 'How are you?'

'As I always am, when you 're anywhere about,' answered the professional drunkard tragically: 'insane.' He put his arm round her shoulders and leaned towards her. 'Utterly insane.'

'I 'd rather we didn't sit like this, you know.' She smiled at him; they looked at one another closely. Then Paxton withdrew his arm and leaned back in his corner of the sofa.

Looking at them, Gregory was suddenly convinced that they were lovers. We needs must love the lowest when we see it. All Molly's lovers were like that: ruffians.

He turned to Spiller. 'Shouldn't we go back to my rooms?' he suggested, interrupting him in the midst of a long explanatory discourse about the projected paper. 'It 'll be quieter there and less stuffy.' Molly and Paxton, Molly and that drunken brute. Was it possible? It was certain: he had no doubts. 'Let 's get out of this beastly place quickly,' he added.

'All right,' Spiller agreed. 'One last lashing of whisky to support us on the way.' He reached for the bottle.

Gregory drank nearly half a tumbler, undiluted. A few yards down the street, he realized that he was rather tipsy.

'I think I must have a very feebly developed herd instinct,' he said. 'How I hate these crowds!' Molly and Silenus-Paxton! He imagined their loves. And he had thought that she had been glad to see him, when first he caught her eye.

They emerged into Bedford Square. The gardens were as darkly mysterious as a piece of country woodland. Woodland without, whisky within, combined to make Gregory's melancholy vocal. *'Che farô senz' Euridice?'* he softly sang.

'You can do without her very well,' said Spiller, replying to the quotation. 'That 's the swindle and stupidity of love. Each time you feel convinced that it 's something immensely significant and everlasting: you feel infinitely. Each time. Three weeks later you 're beginning to find her boring; or somebody else rolls the eye and the infinite emotions are transferred and you 're off on another eternal week-end. It 's a sort of practical joke. Very stupid and disagreeable. But then nature's humour isn't ours.'

'You think it 's a joke, that infinite feeling?' asked Gregory indignantly. 'I don't. I believe that it represents something real, outside ourselves, something in the structure of the universe.'

'A different universe with every mistress, eh?'

'But if it occurs only once in a lifetime?' asked Gregory in a maudlin voice. He longed to tell his companion how unhappy he felt about Molly, how much unhappier than anybody had ever felt before.

'It doesn't,' said Spiller.

'But if I say it does?' Gregory hiccoughed.

'That 's only due to lack of opportunities,' Spiller replied in his most decisively scientific, *ex cathedra* manner.

'I don't agree with you,' was all that Gregory could say feebly. He decided not to mention his unhappiness. Spiller might not be a sympathetic listener. Coarse old devil!

'Personally,' Spiller continued, 'I 've long ago ceased trying to make sense of it. I just accept these infinite emotions for what they are—very stimulating and exciting while they last—and don't attempt to rationalize or explain them. It 's the only sane and scientific way of treating the facts.'

There was a silence. They had emerged into the brilliance of the Tottenham Court Road. The polished roadway reflected the arc lamps. The entrances to the cinema palaces were caverns of glaring yellow light. A pair of buses roared past.

'They 're dangerous, those infinite emotions,' Spiller went on, 'very dangerous. I once came within an inch of getting married on the strength of one of them. It began on a steamer. You know what steamers are. The extraordinary aphrodisiac effects sea voyaging has on people who aren't used to it, especially women! They really ought to be studied by some competent physiologist. Of course, it may be simply the result of idleness, high feeding, and constant proximity—though I doubt if you 'd get the same results in similar circumstances on land. Perhaps the total change of environment, from earth to water, undermines the usual terrestrial prejudices. Perhaps the very shortness of the voyage helps—the sense that it 's so soon coming to an end that rosebuds must be gathered and hay made while the sun shines. Who knows?' He shrugged his shoulders. 'But in any case, it 's most extraordinary. Well, it began, as I say, on a steamer.'

Gregory listened. A few minutes since the trees of Bedford Square had waved in the darkness of his boozily maudlin soul. The lights, the noise, the movement of the Tottenham Court Road were now behind his eyes as well as before them. He listened, grinning. The story lasted well into the Charing Cross Road.

By the time it had come to an end, Gregory was feeling in an entirely jolly and jaunty mood. He had associated himself with Spiller; Spiller's adventures were his. He guffawed with laughter, he readjusted his monocle, which had been dangling all this time at the end of its string, which had been tinkling at every step against the buttons of his waistcoat. (A broken heart, it must be obvious to any one who has the slightest sensibility, cannot possibly wear an eyeglass.) He too was a bit of a dog, now. He hiccoughed; a certain suspicion of queasiness tempered his jollity, but it was no more than the faintest suspicion. Yes, yes; he too knew all about life on steamers, even though the longest of his sea voyages had only been from Newhaven to Dieppe.

When they reached Cambridge Circus, the theatres were just disgorging their audiences. The pavements were crowded; the air was full of noise and the perfume of women. Overhead, the sky-signs winced and twitched. The theatre vestibules brightly glared. It was an unaristocratic and vulgar luxury, to which Gregory had no difficulty in feeling himself superior. Through his Cyclopean monocle, he gazed inquiringly at every woman they passed. He felt wonderfully reckless (the queasiness was the nearest suspicion of an unpleasant sensation), wonderfully jolly, and—yes, that was curious—large: larger than life. As for Molly Voles, he 'd teach her.

'Lovely creature, that,' he said, indicating a cloak of pink silk and gold, a close-cropped golden head.

Spiller nodded indifferently. 'About that paper of ours,' he said thoughtfully. 'I was thinking that we might start off with a series of articles on the metaphysical basis of science, the reasons, historical and philosophical, that we have for assuming that scientific truth is true.'

'H'm,' said Gregory.

'And concurrently a series on the meaning and point of art. Start right from the beginning in both cases. Quite a good idea, don't you think?'

'Quite,' said Gregory. One of his monocular glances had been received with a smile of invitation; she was ugly, unfortunately, and obviously professional. Haughtily he glared past her, as though she were not there.

'But whether Tolstoy was right,' Spiller was meditatively saying, 'I never feel sure. Is it true, what he says, that the function of art is the conveyance of emotion? In part, I should say, but not exclusively, not exclusively.' He shook his large head.

'I seem to be getting tipsier,' said Gregory, more to himself than to his companion. He still walked correctly, but he was conscious, too conscious, of the fact. And the suspicion of queasiness was becoming well founded.

Spiller did not hear or, hearing, ignored the remark. 'For me,' he continued, 'the main function of art is to impart knowledge. The artist knows more than the rest of us. He is born knowing more about his soul than we know of ours, and more about the relations existing between his soul and the cosmos. He anticipates what will be common knowledge in a higher state of development. Most of our moderns are primitives compared with the most advanced of the dead.'

'Quite,' said Gregory, not listening. His thoughts were elsewhere, with his eyes.

'Moreover,' Spiller went on, 'he can say what he knows, and say it in such a way that our own rudimentary, incoherent, unrealized knowledge of what he talks about falls into a kind of pattern—like iron filings under the influence of the magnet.'

There were three of them—ravishingly, provocatively young—standing in a group at the pavement's edge. They chattered, they stared with bright derisive eyes at the passers-by, they commented in audible whispers, they burst into irrepressible shrill laughter. Spiller and Gregory approached, were spied by one of the three, who nudged her fellows.

'Oh, Lord!'

They giggled, they laughed aloud, they were contorted with mockery.

'Look at old Golliwog!' That was for Spiller, who walked bareheaded, his large grey hat in his hand.

'And the nut!' Another yell for the monocle.

'It's that magnetic power,' said Spiller, quite unaware of the lovely derision of which he was the object, 'that power of organizing mental chaos into a pattern, which makes a truth uttered poetically, in art, more valuable than a truth uttered scientifically, in prose.'

Playfully reproving, Gregory wagged a finger at the mockers. There was a yet more piercing yell. The two men passed: smilingly Gregory looked back. He felt jauntier and jollier than ever; but the suspicion was ripening to a certainty.

'For instance,' said Spiller, 'I may know well enough that all men are mortal. But this knowledge is organized and given a form, it is even actually increased and deepened, when Shakespeare talks about all our yesterdays having lighted fools the way to dusty death.'

Gregory was trying to think of an excuse for giving his companion the slip and turning back to dally with the three. He would love them all, simultaneously.

La touffe échevelée
De baisers que les dieux gardaient si bien mêlée.

The Mallarméan phrase came back to him, imposing on his vague desires (old man Spiller was quite right, old imbecile!) the most elegant of forms. Spiller's words came to him as though from a great distance.

'And the *Coriolan* overture is a piece of new knowledge, as well as a composer of existing chaotic knowledge.'

He would suggest dropping in at the Monico, pretext a call of nature, slip out, and never return. Old imbecile, maundering on like that! Not but what it mightn't have been quite interesting, at the right moment. But now . . . And he thought, no doubt, that he was going to tap him, Gregory, for a thousand pounds! Gregory could have laughed aloud. But his derision was tinged with an uneasy consciousness that his tipsiness had definitely taken a new and disquieting form.

'Some of Cézanne's landscapes,' he heard Spiller saying.

Suddenly, from a shadowed doorway a few yards down the street in front of them, there emerged, slowly, tremulously, a thing: a bundle of black tatters that moved on a pair of old squashed boots, that was topped by a broken, dog's-eared hat. It had a face, clay-coloured and emaciated. It had hands, in one of which it held a little tray with matchboxes. It opened its mouth, from which two or three of the discoloured teeth were missing; it sang, all but inaudibly. Gregory thought he recognized 'Nearer, my God, to Thee.' They approached.

'Certain frescoes of Giotto, certain early Greek sculptures,' Spiller went on with his interminable catalogue.

The thing looked at them, Gregory looked at the thing. Their eyes met. Gregory expanded his left eye-socket. The monocle dropped to the end of its silken tether. He felt in his right-hand trouser pocket, the pocket where he kept his silver, for a sixpence, a shilling even. The pocket contained only four half-crowns. Half a crown? He hesitated, drew one of the coins half-way to the surface, then let it fall again with a chink. He dipped his left hand into his other trouser pocket; he withdrew it, full. Into the proffered tray he dropped three pennies and a halfpenny.

'No, I don't want any matches,' he said.

Gratitude interrupted the hymn. Gregory had never felt so much ashamed in his life. His monocle tinkled against the buttons of his waistcoat. Deliberately, he placed one foot before the other, walking with correctness, but as though on a tight-rope. Yet another insult to the thing. He wished to God he were sober. He wished to God he hadn't desired with such precision that 'dishevelled tuft of kisses.' Threepence-halfpenny! But he could still run back and give half a crown, two half-crowns. He could still run back. Step by step, as though on the tight-rope, he advanced, keeping step with Spiller. Four steps, five steps . . . eleven steps, twelve steps, thirteen steps. Oh, the unluckiness! Eighteen steps, nineteen. . . . Too late; it would be ridiculous to turn back now, it would be too conspicuously silly. Twenty-three, twenty-four steps. The suspicion was a certainty of queasiness, a growing certainty.

'At the same time,' Spiller was saying, 'I really don't see how the vast majority of scientific truths and hypotheses can ever become the subject of art. I don't see how they can be given poetic, emotive significance without losing their precision. How could you render the electro-magnetic theory of light, for example, in a moving literary form? It simply can't be done.'

'Oh, for God's sake'! shouted Gregory with a sudden outburst of fury, 'for God's sake, shut up! How can you go on talking and talking away like this?' He hiccoughed again, more profoundly and menacingly than before.

'But why on earth not?' asked Spiller with a mild astonishment.

'Talking about art and science and poetry,' said Gregory tragically, almost with tears in his eyes, 'when there are two million people in England on the brink of starvation. Two million.' He meant the repetition to be impressive, but he hiccoughed yet once more; he was feeling definitely rather sick. 'Living in stinking hovels,' he went on, *decrescendo*, 'promiscuously, herded together, like animals. Worse than animals.'

They had halted; they confronted one another.

'How can you?' repeated Gregory, trying to reproduce the generous indignation of a moment since. But anticipations of nausea were creeping up from his stomach, like a miasma from a marsh, filling his mind, driving out from it every thought, every emotion, except the horrid apprehension of being sick.

Spiller's large face suddenly lost its monumental, Victorian celebrity's appearance; it seemed to fall to pieces. The mouth opened, the eyes puckered up, the forehead broke into wrinkles, and the deep lines running from either side of the nose to the corners of the mouth expanded and contracted wildly, like a pair of demented glove-stretchers. An immense sound came out of him. His great body was shaken with gigantic laughter.

Patiently—patience was all that was left him, patience and a fading hope—Gregory waited for the paroxysm to subside. He had made a fool of himself; he was being derided. But he was past caring.

Spiller so far recovered as to be able to speak. 'You 're wonderful, my dear Gregory,' he said, gasping. The tears stood in his eyes. 'Really superb.' He took him affectionately by the arm and, still laughing, walked on. Gregory perforce walked too; he had no choice.

'If you don't mind,' he said after a few steps, 'I think we 'll take a taxi.'

'What, to Jermyn Street?' said Spiller.

'I think we 'd better,' Gregory insisted.

Climbing into the vehicle, he managed to entangle his monocle in the handle of the door. The string snapped: the glass dropped on the floor of the cab. Spiller picked it up and returned it to him.

'Thank you,' said Gregory, and put it out of harm's way into a waistcoat pocket.

*From* TWO OR THREE GRACES (1926).

# CHAWDRON

From behind the outspread *Times* I broke silence. 'Your friend Chawdron 's dead, I see.'

'Dead?' repeated Tilney half incredulously. 'Chawdron dead?'

'"Suddenly, of heart failure,"' I went on, reading from the obituary, '"at his residence in St. James's Square."'

'Yes, his heart. . . .' He spoke meditatively. 'How old was he? Sixty?'

'Fifty-nine. I didn't realize the ruffian had been rich for so long. ". . . the extraordinary business instinct, coupled with a truly Scottish doggedness and determination, which raised him, before he was thirty-five, from obscurity and comparative poverty to the height of opulence." Don't you wish you could write like that? My father lost a quarter of a century's savings in one of his companies.'

'Served him right for saving!' said Tilney with a sudden savagery. Surprised, I looked at him over the top of my paper. On his gnarled and ruddy face was an expression of angry gloom. The news had evidently depressed him. Besides, he was always ill-tempered at breakfast. My poor father was paying. 'What sort of jam is that by you?' he asked fiercely.

'Strawberry.'

'Then I 'll have some marmalade.'

I passed him the marmalade and, ignoring his bad temper, 'When the Old Man,' I continued, 'and along with him, of course, most of the other shareholders, had sold out at about eighty per cent dead loss, Chawdron did a little quiet conjuring and the price whizzed up again. But by that time he was the owner of practically all the stock.'

'I 'm always on the side of the ruffians,' said Tilney. 'On principle.'

'Oh, so am I. All the same, I do regret those twelve thousand pounds.'

Tilney said nothing. I returned to the obituary.

'What do they say about the New Guinea Oil Company scandal?' he asked after a silence.

'Very little; and the touch is beautifully light. "The findings of the Royal Commission were on the whole favourable, though it was generally considered at the time that Mr. Chawdron had acted somewhat inconsiderately."'

Tilney laughed. '"Inconsiderately" is good. I wish I made fourteen hundred thousand pounds each time I was inconsiderate.'

'Was that what he made out of the New Guinea Oil business?'

'So he told me, and I don't think he exaggerated. He never lied for pleasure. Out of business hours he was remarkably honest.'

'You must have known him very well.'

'Intimately,' said Tilney, and, pushing away his plate, he began to fill his pipe.

'I envy you. What a specimen for one's collection! But didn't you get rather bored with living inside the museum, so to speak, behind the menagerie bars? Being intimate with a specimen—it must be trying.'

'Not if the specimen 's immensely rich,' Tilney answered. 'You see, I 'm partial to Napoleon brandy and Corona Coronas; parasitism has its rewards. And if you 're skilful, it needn't have too many penalties. It 's possible to be a high-souled louse, an independent tapeworm. But Napoleon brandy and Coronas weren't the only attractions Chawdron possessed for me. I have a disinterested, scientific curiosity about the enormously wealthy. A man with an income of more than fifty thousand a year is such a fantastic and improbable being. Chawdron was specially interesting because he 'd *made* all his money—mainly dishonestly; that was the fascinating thing. He was a large-scale, Napoleonic crook. And, by God, he looked it! Did you know him by sight?'

I shook my head.

'Like an illustration to Lombroso. A criminal type. But intelligently criminal, not brutally. He wasn't brutal.'

'I thought he was supposed to look like a chimpanzee,' I put in.

'He did,' said Tilney. 'But, after all, a chimpanzee isn't brutal-looking. What you 're struck by in a chimpanzee is its all-but-human appearance. So very intelligent, so nearly a man. Chawdron's face had just that look. But with a difference. The chimpanzee looks gentle and virtuous and quite without humour. Whereas Chawdron's intelligent all-but-humanity was sly and, underneath the twinkling jocularity, quite ruthless. Oh, a strange, interesting creature! I got a lot of fun out of my study of him. But in the end, of course, he did bore me. Bored me to death. He was so drearily uneducated. Didn't know the most obvious things, couldn't understand a generalization. And then quite disgustingly without taste, without aesthetic sense or understanding. Metaphysically and artistically a cretin.'

'The obituarist doesn't seem to be of your opinion.' I turned again to *The Times*. 'Where is it now? Ah! "A remarkable writer was lost when Chawdron took up finance. Not entirely lost, however; for the brilliant *Autobiography*, published in 1921, remains as a lasting memorial to his talents as a stylist and narrator." What do you say to that?' I asked, looking up at Tilney.

He smiled enigmatically. 'It 's quite true.'

'I never read the book, I confess. Is it any good?'

'It 's damned good.' His smile mocked, incomprehensibly.

'Are you pulling my leg?'

'No, it was really and genuinely good.'

'Then he can hardly have been such an artistic cretin as you make out.'

'Can't he?' Tilney echoed and, after a little pause, suddenly laughed aloud. 'But he *was* a cretin,' he continued on a little gush of confidingness that seemed to sweep away the barriers of his willed discretion, 'and the book *was* good. For the excellent reason that he didn't write it. I wrote it.'

'You?' I looked at him, wondering if he were joking. But his face, after the quick illumination of laughter, had gone serious, almost gloomy. A curious face, I reflected. Handsome in its way, intelligent, aware, yet with something rather sinister about it, almost repulsive. The superficial charm and good humour of the man seemed to overlie a fundamental hardness, an uncaringness, a hostility even. Too much good living, moreover, had left its marks on that face. It was patchily red and lumpy. The fine features had become rather gross. There was a coarseness mingled with the native refinement. Did I like Tilney or did I not? I never rightly knew. And perhaps the question was irrelevant. Perhaps Tilney was one of those men who are not meant to be liked or disliked as men—only as performers. I liked his conversation, I was amused, interested, instructed by what he said. To ask myself if I also liked what he *was*—this was, no doubt, beside the point.

Tilney got up from the table and began to walk up and down the room, his pipe between his teeth, smoking. 'Poor Chawdron 's dead now, so there 's no reason——' He left the sentence unfinished, and for a few seconds was silent. Standing by the window, he looked out through the rain-blurred glass on to the greens and wet greys of the Kentish landscape. 'England looks like the vegetables at a Bloomsbury boarding-house dinner,' he said slowly. 'Horrible! Why do we live in this horrible country? Ugh!' He shuddered and turned away. There was another silence. The door opened and the maid came in to clear the breakfast table. I say 'the maid'; but the brief impersonal term is inaccurate. Inaccurate, because wholly inadequate to describe Hawtrey. What came in, when the door opened, was personified efficiency, was a dragon, was stony ugliness, was a pillar of society, was the Ten Commandments on legs. Tilney, who did not know her, did not share my terror of the domestic monster. Unaware of the intense disapproval which I could feel her silently radiating (it was after ten; Tilney's slug-a-bed habits had thrown out of gear the whole of her morning's routine) he continued to walk up and down, while Hawtrey busied herself round the table. Suddenly he laughed. 'Chawdron's *Autobiography* was the only one of my books I ever made any money out of,' he said. I listened apprehensively, lest he should say anything which might shock or offend the dragon. 'He turned over all the royalties to me,' Tilney went on. 'I made the best part of three thousand pounds out of his *Autobiography*. Not to mention the five hundred he gave me for writing it.' (Was it quite delicate, I wondered, to talk of such large sums of money in front of one so incomparably more virtuous than ourselves and so much poorer? Fortunately, Tilney changed the subject.) 'You ought to read it,' he said. 'I 'm really quite offended that you haven't. All that lower middle-class childhood in Peebles—it 's really masterly.' ('Lower middle-class'—I shuddered. Hawtrey's father had owned a shop; but he had had misfortunes.) 'It 's *Clayhanger* and *L'Education Sentimentale* and *David Copperfield* all rolled into one. Really superb. And the first adventurings into the world of finance were pure Balzac—magnificent.' He laughed again, this time without bitterness, amusedly; he was warming to his subject. 'I even put in a Rastignac soliloquy from the top of the dome of St. Paul's, made him shake his fist at the City. Poor old Chawdron! he was thrilled. "If only I 'd known what an interesting life I 'd had," he used to say to me. "Known while the life was going on."' (I looked at Hawtrey to see if she was resenting the references to an interesting life. But her face was closed; she worked as though she were deaf.) '"You wouldn't have lived it," I told him. "You must leave the discovery of the excitingness to the artists."' He was silent again. Hawtrey laid the last spoon on the tray and moved towards the door. Thank heaven! 'Yes, the artists,' Tilney went on in a tone that had gone melancholy again. 'I really was one, you know.' (The departing Hawtrey must have heard that damning confession. But then, I reflected, she always did know that I and my friends were a bad lot.) 'Really *am* one,' he insisted. '*Qualis artifex!* But *pereo, pereo*. Somehow, I 've never done anything but perish all my life. Perish, perish, perish. Out of laziness and because there always seemed so much time. But I 'm going to be forty-eight next June. Forty-eight! There isn't any time. And the laziness is such a habit. So 's the talking. It 's so easy to talk. And so amusing. At any rate for oneself.'

'For other people too,' I said; and the compliment was sincere. I might be uncertain whether or no I liked Tilney. But I genuinely liked his performance as a talker. Sometimes, perhaps, that performance was a little too professional. But, after all, an artist must be a professional.

'It 's what comes of being mostly Irish,' Tilney went on. 'Talking 's the national vice. Like opium-smoking with the Chinese!' (Hawtrey re-entered silently to sweep up the crumbs and fold the table-cloth.) 'If you only knew the number of masterpieces I 've allowed to evaporate at dinner-tables, over the cigars and the whisky!' (Two things of which, I knew, the Pillar of Society virtuously disapproved.) 'A whole library. I might have been—what? Well, I suppose I might have been a frightful old bore.' He answered himself with a forced self-mockery. '"The Complete Works of Edmund Tilney, in Thirty-Eight Volumes, post octavo." I dare say the world ought to be grateful to me for sparing it *that*. All the same, I get a bit depressed when I look over the back numbers of the *Thursday Review* and read those measly little weekly articles of mine. *Parturiunt montes*——'

'But they 're good articles,' I protested. If I had been more truthful, I would have said that they were sometimes good—when he took the trouble to make them good. Sometimes, on the contrary——

'*Merci, cher maître!*' he answered ironically. 'But hardly more perennial than brass, you must admit. Monuments of wood pulp. It 's depressing being a failure. Particularly if it 's your fault, if you might have been something else.'

I mumbled something. But what was there to say? Except as a professional talker, Tilney *had* been a failure. He had great talents and he was a literary journalist who sometimes wrote a good article. He had reason to feel depressed.

'And the absurd, ironical thing,' he continued, 'is that the one really good piece of work I ever did is another man's autobiography. I could never prove my authorship even if I wanted to. Old Chawdron was very careful to destroy all the evidences of the crime. The business arrangements were all verbal. No documents of any kind. And the manuscript, *my* manuscript—he bought it off me. It 's burnt.'

I laughed. 'He took no risks with you.' Thank heaven! The dragon was preparing to leave the room for good.

'None whatever,' said Tilney. 'He was going to be quite sure of wearing his laurel wreath. There was to be no other claimant. And at the time, of course, I didn't care two pins. I took the high line about reputation. Good art—and Chawdron's *Autobiography* was good art, a really first-rate novel—good art is its own reward.' (Hawtrey's comment on this was almost to slam the door as she departed.) 'You know the style of thing? And in this case it was more than its own reward. There was money in it. Five hundred down and all the royalties. And I was horribly short of money at the moment. If I hadn't been, I 'd never have written the book. Perhaps that 's been one of my disadvantages—a small independent income and not very extravagant tastes. I happened to be in love with a very expensive young woman at the time when Chawdron made his offer. You can't go dancing and drinking champagne on five hundred a year. Chawdron's cheque was timely. And there I was, committed to writing his memoirs for him. A bore, of course. But luckily the young woman jilted me soon afterwards; so I had time to waste. And Chawdron was a ruthless taskmaster. And besides, I really enjoyed it once I got started. It really was its own reward. But now—now that the book 's written and the money 's spent and I 'm soon going to be fifty, instead of forty as it was then—now, I must say, I 'd rather like to have at least one good book to my credit. I 'd like to be known as the author of that admirable novel, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Chawdron*, but, alas, I shan't be.' He sighed. 'It 's Benjamin Chawdron, not Edmund Tilney, who 'll have his little niche in the literary histories. Not that I care much for literary history. But I do rather care, I must confess, for the present anticipations of the niche. The drawing-room reputation, the mentions in the newspapers, the deference of the young, the sympathetic curiosity of the women. All the by-products of successful authorship. But there, I sold them to Chawdron. For a good price. I can't complain. Still, I *do* complain. Have you got any pipe tobacco? I 've run out of mine.'

I gave him my pouch. 'If I had the energy,' he went on, as he refilled his pipe, 'or if I were desperately hard up, which, thank heaven and at the same time alas! I 'm not at the moment, I could make another book out of Chawdron. Another and a better one. Better,' he began explaining, and then interrupted himself to suck at the flame of the match he had lighted, 'because . . . so much more . . . malicious.' He threw the match away. 'You can't write a good book without being malicious. In the *Autobiography* I made a hero of Chawdron. I was paid to; besides, it was Chawdron himself who provided me with my documents. In this other book he 'd be the villain. Or in other words, he 'd be himself as others saw him, not as he saw himself. Which is, incidentally, the only valid difference between the virtuous and the wicked that *I* 've ever been able to detect. When you yourself indulge in any of the deadly sins, you 're always justified—they 're never deadly. But when any one else indulges, you 're very properly indignant. Old Rousseau had the courage to say that he was the most virtuous man in the world. The rest of us only silently believe it. But to return to Chawdron. What I 'd like to do now is to write his biography, not his autobiography. And the biography of a rather different aspect of the man. Not about the man of action, the captain of industry, the Napoleon of finance and so forth. But about the domestic, the private, the sentimental Chawdron.'

'*The Times* had its word about that,' said I; and, picking up the paper once more, I read: '"Under a disconcertingly brusque and even harsh manner Mr. Chawdron concealed the kindliest of natures. A stranger meeting him for the first time was often repelled by a certain superficial roughness. It was only to his intimates that he revealed"—guess what!—"the heart of gold beneath."'

'Heart of gold!' Tilney took his pipe out of his mouth to laugh.

'And he also, I see, had "a deep religious sense."' I laid the paper down.

'Deep? It was bottomless.'

'Extraordinary,' I reflected aloud, 'the way they *all* have hearts of gold and religious senses. Every single one, from the rough old man of science to the tough old business man and the gruff old statesman.'

'Hearts of gold!' Tilney repeated. 'But gold 's much too hard. Hearts of putty, hearts of vaseline, hearts of hog-wash. That 's more like it. Hearts of hog-wash. The tougher and bluffer and gruffer they are outside, the softer they are within. It 's a law of nature. I 've never come across an exception. Chawdron was the rule incarnate. Which is precisely what I want to show in this other, potential book of mine—the ruthless Napoleon of finance paying for his ruthlessness and his Napoleonism by dissolving internally into hog-wash. For that 's what happened to him: he dissolved into hog-wash. Like the Strange Case of Mr. Valdemar in Edgar Allan Poe. I saw it with my own eyes. It's a terrifying spectacle. And the more terrifying when you realize that, but for the grace of God, there goes yourself—and still more so when you begin to doubt of the grace of God, when you see that there in fact you *do* go. Yes, you and I, my boy. For it isn't only the tough old business men who have the hearts of hog-wash. It 's also, as you yourself remarked just now, the gruff old scientists, the rough old scholars, the bluff old admirals and bishops, and all the other pillars of Christian society. It 's everybody, in a word, who has made himself too hard in the head or the carapace; everybody who aspires to be non-human—whether angel or machine it doesn't matter. Super-humanity is as bad as sub-humanity, is the same thing finally. Which shows how careful one should be if one 's an intellectual. Even the mildest sort of intellectual. Like me, for example. I 'm not one of your genuine ascetic scholars. God forbid! But I 'm decidedly high-brow, and I 'm literary; I 'm even what the newspapers call a "thinker." I suffer from a passion for ideas. Always have, from boyhood onwards. With what results? That I 've never been attracted by any woman who wasn't a bitch.'

I laughed. But Tilney held up his hand in a gesture of protest. 'It 's a serious matter,' he said. 'It 's disastrous, even. Nothing but bitches. Imagine!'

'I 'm imagining,' I said. 'But where do the books and the ideas come in? *Post* isn't necessarily *propter*.'

'It 's *propter* in this case all right. Thanks to the books and the ideas, I never learnt how to deal with real situations, with solid people and things. Personal relationships—I 've never been able to manage them effectively. Only ideas. With ideas I 'm at home. With the *idea* of personal relationships, for example. People think I 'm an excellent psychologist. And I suppose I am. Spectatorially. But I 'm a bad experiencer. I 've lived most of my life posthumously, if you see what I mean; in reflections and conversations after the fact. As though my existence were a novel or a text-book of psychology or a biography, like any of the others on the library shelves. An awful situation. That was why I 've always liked the bitches so much, always been so grateful to them—because they were the only women I ever contrived to have a non-posthumous, contemporary, concrete relation with. The only ones.' He smoked for a moment in silence.

'But why the only ones?' I asked.

'Why?' repeated Tilney. 'But isn't it rather obvious? For the shy man, that is to say the man who doesn't know how to deal with real situations and people, bitches are the only possible lovers, because they 're the only women who are prepared to come to meet him, the only ones who 'll make the advances he doesn't know how to make.'

I nodded. 'Shy men have cause to be drawn to bitches: I see that. But why should the bitches be drawn to the shy men? What 's their inducement to make those convenient advances? That 's what I don't see.'

'Oh, of course, they don't make them unless the shy man 's attractive,' Tilney answered. 'But in my case the bitches always were attracted. Always. And, quite frankly, they were right. I was tolerably picturesque, I had that professional Irish charm, I could talk, I was several hundred times more intelligent than any of the young men they were likely to know. And then, I fancy, my very shyness was an asset. You see, it didn't really look like shyness. It exteriorized itself as a kind of god-like impersonality and remoteness—most exciting for such women. I had the charm in their eyes of Mount Everest or the North Pole—something difficult and unconquered that aroused the record-breaking instincts in them. And at the same time my shy remoteness made me seem somehow superior; and, as you know, few pleasures can be compared with the sport of dragging down superiority and proving that it 's no better than oneself. My air of disinterested remoteness has always had a *succès fou* with the bitches. They all adore me because I 'm so "different." "But you 're different, Edmund, you 're different," ' he fluted in falsetto. 'The bitches! Under their sentimentalities, their one desire, of course, was to reduce me as quickly as possible to the most ignoble undifference. . . .'

'And were they successful?' I asked.

'Oh, always. Naturally. It 's not because a man 's shy and bookish that he isn't a *porco di prim' ordine*. Indeed, the more shyly bookish, the more likely he is to be secretly porkish. Or if not a *porco*, at least an *asino*, an *oca*, a *vitello*. It 's the rule, as I said just now; the law of nature. There 's no escaping.'

I laughed. 'I wonder which of the animals I am?'

Tilney shook his head. 'I 'm not a zoologist. At least,' he added, 'not when I 'm talking to the specimen under discussion. Ask your own conscience.'

'And Chawdron?' I wanted to hear more about Chawdron. 'Did Chawdron grunt, or bray, or moo?'

'A little of each. And if earwigs made a noise . . . No, not earwigs. Worse than that. Chawdron was an extreme case, and the extreme cases are right outside the animal kingdom.'

'What are they, then? Vegetables?'

'No, no. Worse than vegetables. They 're spiritual. Angels, that 's what they are: putrefied angels. It 's only in the earlier stages of the degeneration that they bleat and bray. After that they twang the harp and flap their wings. Pigs' wings, of course. They 're angels in pigs' clothing. Hearts of hog-wash. Did I ever tell you about Chawdron and Charlotte Salmon?'

'The 'cellist?'

He nodded. 'What a woman!'

'And her playing! So clotted, so sagging, so greasy . . .' I fumbled for the apt description.

'So terribly Jewish, in a word,' said Tilney. 'That retching emotionalism, that sea-sickness spirituality—purely Hebraic. If only there were a few more Aryans in the world of music! The tears come into my eyes whenever I see a blonde beast at the piano. But that 's by the way. I was going to tell you about Charlotte. You know her, of course?'

'Do I not!'

'Well, it was Charlotte who first revealed to me poor Chawdron's heart of hog-wash. Mine too, indirectly. It was one evening at old Cryle's. Chawdron was there, and Charlotte, and myself, and I forget who else. People from all the worlds, anyhow. Cryle, as you know, has a foot in each. He thinks it 's his mission to bring them together. He 's the matchmaker between God and Mammon. In this case he must have imagined that he 'd really brought off the marriage. Chawdron was Mammon all right; and though you and I would be chary of labelling Charlotte as God, old Cryle, I 'm sure, had no doubts. After all, she plays the 'cello; she 's an Artist. What more can you want?'

'What indeed!'

'I must say, I admired Charlotte that evening,' he went on. 'She knew so exactly the line to take with Chawdron; which was the more surprising as with me she 's never quite pulled it off. She tries the siren on me, very dashing and at the same time extremely mysterious. Her line is to answer my most ordinary remarks with something absolutely incomprehensible, but obviously very significant. If I ask her, for example: "Are you going to the Derby this year?" she 'll smile a really Etruscan smile and answer: "No, I 'm too busy watching the boat-race in my own heart." Well, then, obviously it 's my cue to be terribly intrigued. "Fascinating Sphinx," I ought to say, "tell me more about your visceral boat-race," or words to that effect. Whereupon it would almost certainly turn out that I was rowing stroke in the winning boat. But I 'm afraid I can't bring myself to do what 's expected of me. I just say: "What a pity! I was making up a party to go to Epsom"— and hastily walk away. No doubt, if she was less blackly Semitic I 'd be passionately interested in her boat-race. But as it is, her manœuvre doesn't come off. She hasn't yet been able to think of a better one. With Chawdron, however, she discovered the correct strategy from the first moment. No siren, no mystery for him. His heart was too golden and hogwashy for that. Besides, he was fifty. It 's the age when clergymen first begin to be preoccupied with the underclothing of little schoolgirls in trains, the age when eminent archaeologists start taking a really passionate interest in the Scout movement. Under Chawdron's criminal mask Charlotte detected the pig-like angel, the sentimental Pickwickian child-lover with a taste for the *détournement de mineurs*. Charlotte 's a practical woman: a child was needed, she immediately became the child. And what a child! I 've never seen anything like it. Such prattling! Such innocent big eyes! Such merry,

merry laughter! Such a wonderfully ingenuous way of saying extremely *risqué* things without knowing (sweet innocent) what they meant! I looked on and listened—staggered. Horrified too. The performance was really frightful. Suffer little children . . . But when the little child 's twenty-eight and tough for her age—ah, no; of such is the kingdom of hell. For me, at any rate. But Chawdron was enchanted. Really did seem to imagine he 'd got hold of something below the age of consent. I looked at him in amazement. Was it possible he should be taken in? The acting was so bad, so incredibly unconvincing. Sarah Bernhardt at seventy playing L'Aiglon looked more genuinely like a child than our tough little Charlotte. But Chawdron didn't see it. This man who had lived by his wits, and not merely lived, but made a gigantic fortune by them: was it possible that the most brilliant financier of the age should be so fabulously stupid? "Youth 's infectious," he said to me after dinner, when the women had gone out. And then—you should have seen the smile on his face: beatific, lubrically tender—"She 's like a jolly little kitten, don't you think?" But what I thought of was the New Guinea Oil Company. How was it possible? And then suddenly I perceived that it wasn't merely possible; it was absolutely necessary. Just because he 'd made fourteen hundred thousand pounds out of the New Guinea Oil scandal, it was inevitable that he should mistake a jolly little tarantula like Charlotte for a jolly little kitten. Inevitable. Just as it was inevitable that I should be bowled over by every bitch that came my way. Chawdron had spent his life thinking of oil and stock markets and flotations. I 'd spent mine reading the Best that has been Thought or Said. Neither of us had had the time or energy to live—completely and intensely live, as a human being ought to, on every plane of existence. So he was taken in by the pseudo-kitten, while I succumbed to the only too genuine bitch. Succumbed, what was worse, with full knowledge. For I was never really taken in. I always knew that the bitches were bitches and not milk-white hinds. And now I also know why I was captivated by them. But that, of course, didn't prevent me from continuing to be captivated by them. *Experientia* doesn't, in spite of Mrs. Micawber's Papa. Nor does knowledge.' He paused to relight his pipe.

'What does, then?' I asked.

Tilney shrugged his shoulders. 'Nothing does, once you 've gone off the normal instinctive rails.'

'I wonder if they really exist, those rails?'

'So do I, sometimes,' he confessed. 'But I piously believe.'

'Rousseau and Shelley piously believed too. But has anybody ever seen a Natural Man? Those Noble Savages . . . Read Malinowsky about them; read Frazer; read . . .'

'Oh, I have, I have. And of course the savage isn't noble. Primitives are horrible. I know. But then the Natural Man isn't Primitive Man. He isn't the raw material of humanity; he 's the finished product. The Natural Man is a manufactured article—no, not manufactured; rather, a work of art. What 's wrong with people like Chawdron is that they 're such bad works of art. Unnatural because inartistic. Ary Scheffer instead of Manet. But with this difference. An Ary Scheffer is statically bad; it doesn't get worse with the passage of time. Whereas an inartistic human being degenerates, dynamically. Once he 's started badly, he becomes more and more inartistic. It needs a moral earthquake to arrest the process. Mere flea-bites, like experience or knowledge, are quite unavailing. *Experientia* doesn't. If it did, I should never have succumbed as I did, never have got into financial straits, and therefore never have written Chawdron's autobiography, never have had an opportunity for collecting the intimate and discreditable materials for the biography that, alas, I shall never write. No, no; experience didn't save me from falling a victim yet once more. And to such a ruinously expensive specimen. Not that she was mercenary,' he put in parenthetically. 'She was too well off to need to be. So well off, however, that the mere cost of feeding and amusing her in the style she was accustomed to being fed and amused in was utterly beyond my means. Of course she never realized it. People who are born with more than five thousand a year can't be expected to realize. She 'd have been terribly upset if she had; for she had a heart of gold—like all the rest of us.' He laughed mournfully. 'Poor Sybil! I expect you remember her.'

The name evoked for me a pale-eyed, pale-haired ghost. 'What an astonishingly lovely creature she was!'

'Was, was,' he echoed. '*Fuit.* Lovely and fatal. The agonies she made me suffer! But she was as fatal to herself as to other people. Poor Sybil! I could cry when I think of that inevitable course of hers, that predestined trajectory.' With a stretched forefinger he traced in the air a curve that rose and fell away again. 'She had just passed the crest when I knew her. The descending branch of the curve was horribly steep. What depths awaited her! That horrible little East-Side Jew she even went to the trouble of marrying! And after the Jew, the Mexican Indian. And meanwhile a little champagne had become rather a lot of champagne, rather a lot of brandy; and the occasional Good Times came to be incessant, a necessity, but so boring, such a dismal routine, so terribly exhausting. I didn't see her for four years after our final quarrel; and then (you 've no idea how painful it was) I suddenly found myself shaking hands with a Memento Mori. So worn and ill and tired, so terribly old. Old at thirty-four. And the last time I 'd seen her, she 'd been radiant. Eighteen months later she was dead; but not before the Indian had given place to a Chinaman and the brandy to cocaine. It was all inevitable, of course, all perfectly foreseeable. Nemesis had functioned with exemplary regularity. Which only made it worse. Nemesis is all right for strangers and casual acquaintances. But for oneself, for the people one likes—ah, no! *We* ought to be allowed to sow without reaping. But we mayn't. I sowed books and reaped Sybil. Sybil sowed me (not to mention the others) and reaped Mexicans, cocaine, death. Inevitable, but an outrage, an insulting denial of one's uniqueness and difference. Whereas when people like Chawdron sow New Guinea Oil and reap kittenish Charlottes, one 's delighted; the punctuality of fate seems admirable.'

'I never knew that Charlotte had been reaped by Chawdron,' I put in. 'The harvesting must have been done with extraordinary discretion. Charlotte 's usually so fond of publicity, even in these matters. I should never have expected her . . .'

'But the reaping was very brief and partial,' Tilney explained.

That surprised me even more. 'Charlotte who 's always so determined and clinging! And with Chawdron's millions to cling to. . . .'

'Oh, it wasn't her fault that it went no farther. She had every intention of being reaped and permanently garnered. But she had arranged to go to America for two months on a concert tour. It would have been troublesome to break the contract; Chawdron seemed thoroughly infatuated; two months are soon passed. So she went. Full of confidence. But when she came back, Chawdron was otherwise occupied.'

'Another kitten?'

'A kitten? Poor Charlotte was a grey-whiskered old tigress by comparison. She even came to me in her despair. No enigmatic subtleties this time; she 'd forgotten she was the

Sphinx. "I think you ought to warn Mr. Chawdron against that woman," she told me. "He ought to be made to realize that she 's exploiting him. It 's outrageous." She was full of righteous indignation. Not unnaturally. Even got angry with me because I wouldn't do anything. "But he wants to be exploited," I told her. "It 's his only joy in life." Which was perfectly true. But I couldn't resist being a little malicious. "What makes you want to spoil his fun?" I asked. She got quite red in the face. "Because I think it's disgusting."' Tilney made his voice indignantly shrill. '"It really shocks me to see a man like Mr. Chawdron being made a fool of in that way." Poor Charlotte! Her feelings did her credit. But they were quite unavailing. Chawdron went on being made a fool of, in spite of her moral indignation. Charlotte had to retreat. The enemy was impregnably entrenched.'

'But who was she—the enemy?'

'The unlikeliest *femme fatale* you ever saw. Little; rather ugly; sickly—yes, genuinely sickly, I think, though she did a good deal of pathetic malingering too; altogether too much the lady—refained; you know the type. A governess; not the modern, breezy, athletic sort of governess—the genteel, Jane Eyre, daughter-of-clergyman kind. Her only visible merit was that she was young. About twenty-five, I suppose.'

'But how on earth did they meet? Millionaires and governesses . . .'

'A pure miracle,' said Tilney. 'Chawdron himself detected the hand of Providence. That was the deep religious sense coming in. "If it hadn't been for *both* my secretaries falling ill on the same day," he said to me solemnly (and you 've no idea how ridiculous he looked when he was being solemn—the saintly forger, the burglar in the pulpit), "if it hadn't been for that—and after all, how unlikely it is that both one's secretaries should fall ill at the same moment; what a *fateful* thing to happen!—I should never have got to know my little Fairy." And you must imagine the last words pronounced with a reverent and beautiful smile — indescribably incongruous on that crook's mug of his. "My little Fairy" (her real name, incidentally, was Maggie Spindell), "my little Fairy!"' Tilney seraphically smiled and rolled up his eyes. 'You can't imagine the expression. St. Charles Borromeo in the act of breaking into the till.'

'Painted by Carlo Dolci,' I suggested.

'With the assistance of Rowlandson. Do you begin to get it?'

I nodded. 'But the secretaries?' I was anxious to hear the story.

'They had orders to deal summarily with all begging letters, all communications from madmen, inventors, misunderstood geniuses, and, finally, women. The job was a heavy one, I can tell you. You 've no idea what a rich man's post-bag is like. Fantastic. Well, as I say, Providence had given both private secretaries the 'flu. Chawdron happened to have nothing better to do that morning (Providence again); so he started opening his own correspondence. The third letter he opened was from the Fairy. It bowled him over.'

'What was in it?'

Tilney shrugged his shoulders. 'He never showed it me. But from what I gathered, she wrote about God and the Universe in general and her soul in particular, not to mention *his* soul. Having no taste, and being wholly without education, Chawdron was tremendously impressed by her philosophical rigmarole. It appealed to that deep religious sense! Indeed, he was so much impressed that he immediately wrote giving her an appointment. She came, saw, and conquered. "Providential, my dear boy, providential." And of course he was right. Only I 'd have dechristened the power and called it Nemesis. Miss Spindell was the instrument of Nemesis; she was Atè in the fancy dress that Chawdron's way of life had caused him to find irresistible. She was the finally ripened fruit of sowings in New Guinea Oil and the like.'

'But if your account 's correct,' I put in, 'delicious fruit—that is, for *his* taste. Being exploited by kittens was his only joy; you said it yourself. Nemesis was rewarding him for his offences, not punishing.'

Tilney paused in his striding up and down the room, meditatively knitted his brows, and, taking his pipe out of his mouth, rubbed the side of his nose with the hot bowl. 'Yes,' he said slowly, 'that 's an important point. I 've had it vaguely in my head before now; but now you 've put it clearly. From the point of view of the offender, the punishments of Nemesis may actually look like rewards. Yes, it 's quite true.'

'In which case your Nemesis isn't much use as a policewoman.'

He held up his hand. 'But Nemesis isn't a policewoman. Nemesis isn't moral. At least, she 's only incidentally moral, more or less by accident. Nemesis is something like gravitation, indifferent. All that she does is to guarantee that you shall reap what you sow. And if you sow self-stultification, as Chawdron did with his excessive interest in money, you reap grotesque humiliation. But as you 're already reduced by your offences to a sub-human condition, you won't notice that the grotesque humiliation is a humiliation. There 's your explanation why Nemesis sometimes seems to reward. What she brings is a humiliation only in the absolute sense—for the ideal and complete human being; or at any rate, in practice, for the nearly complete, the approaching-the-ideal human being. For the sub-human specimen it may seem a triumph, a consummation, a fulfilment of the heart's desire. But then, you must remember, the desiring heart is a heart of hog-wash. . . .'

'Moral,' I concluded: 'Live sub-humanly and Nemesis may bring you happiness.'

'Precisely. But *what* happiness!'

I shrugged my shoulders.

'But after all, for the relativist, one sort of happiness is as good as another. You 're taking the God's-eye view.'

'The Greek's-eye view,' he corrected.

'As you like. But anyhow, from the Chawdron's-eye view the happiness is perfect. Therefore we ought to make ourselves like Chawdron.'

Tilney nodded. 'Yes,' he said, 'you need to be a bit of a platonist to see that the punishments *are* punishments. And of course if there *were* another life . . . Or better still, metempsychosis: there are some unbelievably disgusting insects. . . . But even from the merely utilitarian point of view Chawdronism is dangerous. Socially dangerous. A society constructed by and for men can't work if all its components are emotionally sub-men. When the majority of hearts have turned to hog-wash, something catastrophic must happen. So that Nemesis turns out to be a policewoman after all. I hope you 're satisfied.'

'Perfectly.'

'You always did have a very discreditable respect for law and order and morality,' he complained.

'They must exist . . .'

'I don't know why,' he interrupted me.

'In order that you and I may be immoral in comfort,' I explained. 'Law and order exist to make the world safe for lawless and disorderly individualists.'

'Not to mention ruffians like Chawdron. From whom, by the way, we seem to have wandered. Where was I?'

'You 'd just got to his providential introduction to the Fairy.'

'Yes, yes. Well, as I said, she came, saw, conquered. Three days later she was installed in the house. He made her his librarian.'

'*And* his mistress, I suppose.'

Tilney raised his shoulders and threw out his hands in a questioning gesture. 'Ah,' he said, 'that 's the question. There you 're touching the heart of the mystery.'

'But you don't mean to tell me . . .'

'I don't mean to tell you anything, for the good reason that I don't know. I only guess.'

'And what do you guess?'

'Sometimes one thing and sometimes another. The Fairy was genuinely enigmatic. None of poor Charlotte's fabricated sphinxishness; a real mystery. With the Fairy anything was possible.'

'But not with Chawdron surely. In these matters, wasn't he . . . well, all too human?'

'No, only sub-human. Which is rather different. The Fairy roused in him all his sub-human spirituality and religiosity. Whereas with Charlotte it was the no less sub-human passion for the *détournement de mineurs* that came to the surface.'

I objected. 'That 's too crude and schematic to be good psychology. Emotional states aren't so definite and clear-cut as that. There isn't one compartment for spirituality and another, water-tight, for the *détournement de mineurs*. There 's an overlapping, a fusion, a mixture.'

'You 're probably right,' said Tilney. 'And, indeed, one of my conjectures was precisely of such a fusion. You know the sort of thing: discourses insensibly giving place to amorous action—though "action" seems too strong a word to describe what I have in mind. Something ever so softly senile and girlish. Positively spiritual contacts. The loves of the angels—so angelic that, when it was all over, one wouldn't be quite sure whether there had been any interruption in the mystical conversation or not. Which would justify the Fairy in her righteous indignation when she heard of any one's venturing to suppose that she was anything more than Chawdron's librarian. She could almost honestly believe she wasn't. "I think people are too horrid," she used to say to me on these occasions. "I think they 're simply disgusting. Can't they even believe in the possibility of purity?" Angry she was, outraged, hurt.

And the emotion seemed absolutely real. Which was such a rare occurrence in the Fairy's life—at any rate, so it seemed to me—that I was forced to believe it had a genuine cause.'

'Aren't we all genuinely angry when we hear that our acquaintances say the same sort of things about us as we say about them?'

'Of course; and the truer the gossip, the angrier we are. But the Fairy was angry because the gossip was untrue. She insisted on that—and insisted so genuinely (this is the point I was trying to make) that I couldn't help believing she had some justification. Either nothing had happened, or else something so softly and slimily angelic that it slipped past the attention, escaped notice, counted for nothing.'

'But after all,' I protested, 'it 's not because one looks truthful that one 's telling the truth.'

'No. But then you didn't know the Fairy. She hardly ever looked or sounded truthful. There was hardly anything she said that didn't strike me as being in one way or another a manifest lie. So that when she did seem to be telling the truth (and it was incredible how rarely that happened), I was always impressed. I couldn't help thinking there must be a reason. That 's why I attach such importance to the really heart-felt way she got angry when doubts were cast on the purity of her relations with Chawdron. I believe that they really were pure, or else, more probably, that the impurity was such a little one, so to speak, that she could honestly regard it as non-existent. You 'd have had the same impression too, if you 'd heard her. The genuineness of the anger, the outraged protest, was obvious. And then suddenly she remembered that she was a Christian, practically a saint; she 'd start forgiving her enemies. "One 's sorry for them," she 'd say, "because they don't know any better. Poor people! ignorant of all the finer feelings, all the more beautiful relationships." I can't tell you how awful the word "beautiful" was in her mouth! Really blood-curdling. Be-yütiful. Very long-drawn-out, with the *oo* sound thinned and refined into German u-modified. Be-yütiful. Ugh!' He shuddered. 'It made one want to kill her. But then the whole tone of these Christian sentiments made one want to kill her. When she forgave the poor misguided people who couldn't see the be-yüty of her relations with Chawdron you were horrified, you felt sick, you went cold all over. For the whole thing was such a lie, so utterly and bottomlessly false. After the genuine anger against the scandalmongers, the falseness rang even falser than usual. Obvious, unmistakable, painful—like an untuned piano, like a cuckoo in June. Chawdron was deaf to it, of course; just didn't hear the falseness. If you have a deep religious sense, I suppose you don't notice those things. "I think she has the most beautiful character I 've ever met with in a human being," he used to tell me. ("Beautiful" again, you notice. Chawdron caught the trick from her. But in his mouth it was merely funny, not gruesome.) "The most beautiful character"—and then his beatific smile. Grotesque! It was just the same as with Charlotte; he swallowed her whole. Charlotte played the jolly kitten and he accepted her as the jolly kitten. The Fairy's ambition was to be regarded as a sanctified Christian kitten; and duly, as a Christian kitten, a confirmed, communicant, Catholic, canonized kitten, he did regard her. Incredible; but, there! if you spend all your wits and energies knowing about oil, you can't be expected to know much about anything else. You can't be expected to know the difference between tarantulas and kittens, for example; nor the difference between St. Catherine of Siena and a little liar like Maggie Spindell.'

'But did she know she was lying?' I asked. 'Was she consciously a hypocrite?'

Tilney repeated his gesture of uncertainty. '*Chi lo sa?*' he said. 'That 's the finally unanswerable question. It takes us back to where we were just now with Chawdron—to the borderland between biography and autobiography. Which is more real: you as you see yourself, or you as others see you? You in your intentions and motives, or you in the product of your intentions? You in your actions, or you in the results of your actions? And anyhow, what *are* your intentions and motives? And who is the "you" who has intentions? So that when you ask if the Fairy was a conscious liar and hypocrite, I just have to say that I don't know. Nobody knows. Not even the Fairy herself. For, after all, there were several Fairies. There was one that wanted to be fed and looked after and given money and perhaps married one day, if Chawdron's wife happened to die.'

'I didn't know he had a wife,' I interrupted in some astonishment.

'Mad,' Tilney telegraphically explained. 'Been in an asylum for the last twenty-five years. I 'd have gone mad too, if I 'd been married to Chawdron. But that didn't prevent the Fairy from aspiring to be the second Mrs. C. Money is always money.

Well, there was *that* Fairy—the adventuress, the Darwinian specimen struggling for existence. But there was also a Fairy that genuinely wanted to be Christian and saintly. A spiritual Fairy. And if the spirituality happened to pay with tired business men like Chawdron—well, obviously, *tant mieux.*'

'But the falseness you spoke of, the lying, the hypocrisy?'

'Mere inefficiency,' Tilney answered. 'Just bad acting. For, when all 's said and done, what is hypocrisy but bad acting? It differs from saintliness as a performance by Lucien Guitry differed from a performance by his son. One 's artistically good and the other isn't.'

I laughed. 'You forget I 'm a moralist; at least, you said I was. These aesthetic heresies . . .'

'Not heresies; just obvious statements of the facts. For what is the practice of morality? It 's just pretending to be somebody that by nature you aren't. It 's acting the part of a saint, or a hero, or a respectable citizen. What 's the highest ethical ideal in Christianity? It 's expressed in A Kempis's formula—*The Imitation of Christ.* So that the organized Churches turn out to be nothing but vast and elaborate Academies of Dramatic Art. And every school 's a school of acting. Every family 's a family of Crummleses. Every human being is brought up as a mummer. All education, aside from merely intellectual education, is just a series of rehearsals for the part of Jesus or Podsnap or Alexander the Great, or whoever the local favourite may be. A virtuous man is one who 's learned his part thoroughly and acts it competently and convincingly. The saint and the hero are great actors; they 're Kembles and Siddonses—people with a genius for representing heroic characters not their own; or people with the luck to be born so like the heroic ideal that they can just step straight into the part without rehearsal. The wicked are those who either can't or won't learn to act. Imagine a scene-shifter, slightly drunk, dressed in his overalls and smoking a pipe; he comes reeling on to the stage in the middle of the trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice,* shouts down Portia, gives Antonio a kick in the stern, knocks over a few Magnificos, and pulls off Shylock's false beard. That 's a criminal. As for a hypocrite — he 's either a criminal interrupter disguised, temporarily and for his own purposes, as an actor (that 's Tartuffe); or else (and I think this is the commoner type) he 's just a bad actor. By nature, like all the rest of us, he 's a criminal interrupter; but he accepts the teaching of the local Academies of Dramatic

Art and admits that man's highest duty is to act star parts to applauding houses. But he is wholly without talent. When he 's thinking of his noble part, he mouths and rants and gesticulates, till you feel really ashamed as you watch him—ashamed for yourself, for him, for the human species. "Methinks the lady, or gentleman, doth protest too much," is what you say. And these protestations seem even more excessive when, a few moments later, you observe that the protester has forgotten altogether that he 's playing a part and is behaving like the interrupting criminal that it 's his nature to be. But he himself is so little the mummer, so utterly without a talent for convincing representation, that he simply doesn't notice his own interruptions; or if he notices them, does so only slightly and with the conviction that nobody else will notice them. In other words, most hypocrites are more or less unconscious hypocrites. The Fairy, I 'm sure, was one of them. She was simply not aware of being an adventuress with an eye on Chawdron's millions. What she was conscious of was her role—the role of St. Catherine of Siena. She believed in her acting; she was ambitious to be a high-class West End artiste. But, unfortunately, she was without talent. She played her part so unnaturally, with such grotesque exaggerations, that a normally sensitive person could only shudder at the shameful spectacle. It was a performance that only the spiritually deaf and blind could be convinced by. And, thanks to his preoccupations with New Guinea Oil, Chawdron *was* spiritually deaf and blind. His deep religious sense was the deep religious sense of a sub-man. When she paraded the canonized kitten, I felt sea-sick; but Chawdron thought she had the most beyütiful character he 'd ever met with in a human being. And not only did he think she had the most beautiful character; he also, which was almost funnier, thought she had the finest mind. It was her metaphysical conversation that impressed him. She 'd read a few snippets from Spinoza and Plato and some little book on the Christian mystics and a fair amount of that flabby theosophical literature that 's so popular in Garden Suburbs and among retired colonels and ladies of a certain age; so she could talk about the cosmos very profoundly. And, by God, she was profound! I used to lose my temper sometimes, it was such drivel, so dreadfully illiterate. But Chawdron listened reverently, fairly goggling with rapture and faith and admiration. He believed every word. When you 're totally uneducated and have amassed an enormous fortune by legal swindling, you can afford to believe in the illusoriness of matter, the non-existence of evil, the oneness of all diversity, and the spirituality of everything. All his life he 'd kept up his childhood's Presbyterianism—most piously. And now he grafted the Fairy's rigmarole on to the Catechism, or whatever it is that Presbyterians learn in infancy He didn't see that there was any contradiction between the two metaphysics, just as he 'd never seen that there was any incongruity in his being both a good Presbyterian and a consummate swindler. He had acted the Presbyterian part only on Sundays and when he was ill, never in business hours. Religion had never been permitted to invade the sanctities of private life. But with the advance of middle age his mind grew flabbier; the effects of a misspent life began to make themselves felt. And at the same time his retirement from business removed almost all the external distractions. His deep religious sense had more chance to express itself. He could wallow in sentimentality and silliness undisturbed. The Fairy made her providential appearance and showed him which were the softest emotional and intellectual muck-heaps to wallow on. He was grateful—loyally, but a little ludicrously. I shall never forget, for example, the time he talked about the Fairy's genius. We 'd been dining at his house, he and I and the Fairy. A terrible dinner, with the Fairy, as a mixture between St. Catherine of Siena and Mahatma Gandhi, explaining why she was a vegetarian and an ascetic. She had that awful genteel middle-class food complex which makes table manners at Lyon's Corner House so appallingly good—that haunting fear of being low or vulgar which causes people to eat as though they weren't eating. They never take a large mouthful, and only masticate with their front teeth, like rabbits. And they never touch anything with their fingers. I 've actually seen a woman eating cherries with a knife and fork at one of those places. Most extraordinary and most repulsive. Well, the Fairy had that complex—it 's a matter of class—but it was rationalized, with her, in terms of *ahimsa* and ascetic Christianity. Well, she 'd been chattering the whole evening about the spirit of love and its incompatibility with a meat diet, and the necessity of mortifying the body for the sake of the soul, and about Buddha and St. Francis and mystical ecstasies and, above all, herself. Drove me almost crazy with irritation, not to mention the fact that she really began putting me off my food with her rhapsodies of pious horror and disgust. I was thankful when at last she left us in peace to our brandy and cigars. But Chawdron leaned across the table towards me, spiritually beaming from every inch of that forger's face of his. "Isn't she wonderful?" he said. "Isn't she simply *wonderful?*" "Wonderful," I agreed. And then, very solemnly, wagging his finger at me: "I 've known three great intellects in my time," he said, "three minds of genius—Lord Northcliffe, Mr. John Morley, and this little girl. Those three." And he leant back in his chair and nodded at me almost fiercely, as though challenging me to deny it.'

'And did you accept the challenge?' I asked, laughing.

Tilney shook his head. 'I just helped myself to another nip of his 1820 brandy; it was the only retort a rational man could make.'

'And did the Fairy share Chawdron's opinion about her mind?'

'Oh, I think so,' said Tilney, 'I think so. She had a great conceit of herself. Like all these spiritual people. An inordinate conceit. She played the superior role very badly and inconsistently. But all the same she was convinced of her superiority. Inevitably; for, you see, she had an enormous capacity for auto-suggestion. What she told herself three times became true. For example, I used at first to think there was some hocus-pocus about her asceticism. She ate so absurdly little in public and at meals that I fancied she must do a little tucking-in privately in between whiles. But later I came to the conclusion that I 'd maligned her. By dint of constantly telling herself and other people that eating was unspiritual and gross, not to mention impolite and lower-class, she 'd genuinely succeeded, I believe, in making food disgust her. She 'd got to a point where she really couldn't eat more than a very little. Which was one of the causes of her sickliness. She was just under-nourished. But under-nourishment was only *one* of the causes. She was also diplomatically sick. She threatened to die as statesmen threaten to mobilize, in order to get what she wanted. Blackmail, in fact. Not for money; she was curiously disinterested in many ways. What she wanted was his interest, was power over him, was self-assertion. She had headaches for the same reason as a baby howls. If you give in to the baby and do what it wants, it 'll howl again, it 'll make a habit of howling. Chawdron was one of the weak-minded sort of parents. When the Fairy had one of her famous headaches, he was terribly disturbed. The way he fluttered round the sick-room with ice and hot-water bottles and eau-de-Cologne! The *Times* obituarist would have wept to see him; such a touching exhibition of the heart of gold! The result was that the Fairy used to have a headache every three or four days. It was absolutely intolerable.'

'But were they purely imaginary, these headaches?'

Tilney shrugged his shoulders. 'Yes and no. There was certainly a physiological basis. The woman did have pains in her head from time to time. It was only to be expected; she was run down, through not eating enough; she didn't take sufficient exercise, so she had chronic constipation; chronic constipation probably set up a slight chronic inflammation of the ovaries; and she certainly suffered from eye-strain—you could tell that from the beautifully vague, spiritual look in her eyes, the look that comes from uncorrected myopia. There were, as you see, plenty of physiological reasons for her headaches. Her body made her a present, so to speak, of the pain. Her mind then proceeded to work up this raw material. Into what remarkable forms! Touched by her imagination, the headaches became mystic, transcendental. It was infinity in a grain of sand and eternity in an intestinal stasis. Regularly every Tuesday and Friday she died—died with a beautiful Christian resignation, a martyr's fortitude. Chawdron used to come down from the sick-room with tears in his eyes. He 'd never seen such patience, such courage, such grit. There were few men she wouldn't put to shame. She was a wonderful example. And so on. And I dare say it was all quite true. She started by malingering a little, by pretending that the headaches were worse than they were. But her imagination was too lively for her; it got beyond her control. Her pretendings gradually came true and she really did suffer martyrdom each time; she really did very nearly die. And then she got into the habit of being a martyr, and the attacks came on regularly; imagination stimulated the normal activities of inflamed ovaries and poisoned intestines; the pain made its appearance and at once became the raw material of a mystic, spiritual martyrdom taking place on a higher plane. Anyhow, it was all very complicated and obscure. And, obviously, if the Fairy herself had given you an account of her existence at this time, it would have sounded like St. Lawrence's reminiscences of life on the grill. Or rather it would have sounded like the insincere fabrication of such reminiscences. For the Fairy, as I 've said before, was without talent, and sincerity and saintliness are matters of talent. Hypocrisy and insincerity are the products of native incompetence. Those who are guilty of them are people without skill in the arts of behaviour and self-expression. The Fairy's talk would have sounded utterly false to you. But for her it was all genuine. She really suffered, really died, really was good and resigned and courageous. Just as the paranoiac is really Napoleon Bonaparte and the young man with *dementia praecox* is really being spied on and persecuted by a gang of fiendishly ingenious enemies. If *I* were to tell the story from *her* point of view, it would sound really beautiful—not be-yütiful, mind you; but truly and genuinely beautiful; for the good reason that *I* have a gift of expression, which the poor Fairy hadn't. So that, for all but emotional cretins like Chawdron, she was obviously a hypocrite and a liar. Also a bit of a pathological case. For that capacity for auto-suggestion really was rather pathological. She could make things come *too* true. Not merely diseases and martyrdoms and saintliness, but also historical facts, or rather historical not-facts. She authenticated the not-facts by simply repeating that they had happened. For example, she wanted people to believe—she wanted to believe herself—that she had been intimate with Chawdron for years and years, from childhood, from the time of her birth. The fact that he had known her since she was "so high" would explain and justify her present relationship with him. The scandalmongers would have no excuse for talking. So she proceeded bit by bit to fabricate a lifelong intimacy, even a bit of an actual kinship, with her Uncle Benny. I told you that that was what she called him, didn't I? That nickname had its significance; it planted him at once in the table of consanguinity and so disinfected their relations, so to speak, automatically made them innocent.'

'Or incestuous,' I added.

'Or incestuous. Quite. But she didn't consider the D'Annunzioesque refinements. When she gave him that name, she promoted Chawdron to the rank of a dear old kinsman, or at least a dear old family friend. Sometimes she even called him "Nunky Benny," so as to show that she had known him from the cradle—had lisped of nunkies, for the nunkies came. But that wasn't enough. The evidence had to be fuller, more circumstantial. So she invented it—romps with Nunky in the hay, visits to the pantomime with him, a whole outfit of childish memories.'

'But what about Chawdron?' I asked. 'Did he share the invented memories?'

Tilney nodded. 'But for him, of course, they *were* invented.

Other people, however, accepted them as facts. Her reminiscences were so detailed and circumstantial that, unless you *knew* she was a liar, you simply had to accept them. With Chawdron himself she couldn't, of course, pretend that she 'd known him, literally and historically, all those years. Not at first, in any case. The lifelong intimacy started by being figurative and spiritual. "I feel as though I 'd known my Uncle Benny ever since I was a tiny baby," she said to me in his presence, quite soon after she 'd first got to know him; and as always, on such occasions, she made her voice even more whiningly babyish than usual. Dreadful that voice was—so whiny-piny, so falsely sweet. "Ever since I was a teeny, tiny baby. Don't you feel like that, Uncle Benny?" And Chawdron heartily agreed; of course he felt like that. From that time forward she began to expatiate on the incidents which ought to have occurred in that far-off childhood with darling Nunky. They were the same incidents, of course, as those which she actually remembered when she was talking to strangers and he wasn't there. She made him give her old photographs of himself—visions of him in high collars and frock-coats, in queer-looking Norfolk jackets, in a top-hat sitting in a victoria. They helped her to make her fancies real. With their aid and the aid of his reminiscences she constructed a whole life in common with him. "Do you remember, Uncle Benny, the time we went to Cowes on your yacht and I fell into the sea?" she 'd ask. And Chawdron, who thoroughly entered into the game, would answer: "Of course I remember. And when we 'd fished you out, we had to wrap you in hot blankets and give you warm rum and milk. And you got quite drunk." "Was I funny when I was drunk, Uncle Benny?" And Chawdron would rather lamely and ponderously invent a few quaintnesses which were then incorporated in the history. So that on a future occasion the Fairy could begin: "Nunky Benny, do you remember those ridiculous things I said when you made me drunk with rum and hot milk that time I fell into the sea at Cowes?" And so on. Chawdron loved the game, thought it simply too sweet and whimsical and touching—positively like something out of Barrie or A. A. Milne—and was never tired of playing it. As for the Fairy—for her it wasn't a game at all. The not-facts had been repeated till they became facts. "But come, Miss Spindell," I said to her once, when she 'd been telling me—*me!*—about some adventure she 'd had with Uncle Benny when she was a toddler, "come, come, Miss Spindell" (I always called her that, though she longed to be my Fairy as well as Chawdron's and would have called me Uncle Ted if I 'd given her the smallest encouragement; but I took a firm line; she was always Miss Spindell for me), "come," I said, "you seem to forget that it 's only just over a year since you saw Mr. Chawdron for the first time." She looked at me quite blankly for a moment without saying anything. "You can't seriously expect me to forget too," I added. Poor Fairy! The blankness suddenly gave place to a painful, blushing embarrassment. "Oh, of course," she began, and laughed nervously. "It 's as though I 'd known him for ever. My imagination . . ." She trailed off into silence, and a minute later made an excuse to leave me. I could see she was upset, physically upset, as though she 'd been woken up too suddenly out of a sound sleep, jolted out of one world into another moving in a different direction. But when I saw her the next day, she seemed to be quite herself again. She had suggested herself back into the dream world; from the other end of the table, at lunch, I heard her talking to an American business acquaintance of Chawdron's about the fun she and Uncle Benny used to have on his grouse moor in Scotland. But from that time forth, I noticed, she never talked to me about her apocryphal childhood again. A curious incident; it made me look at her hypocrisy in another light. It was then I began to realize that the lie in her soul was mainly an unconscious lie, the product of pathology and a lack of talent. Mainly; but sometimes, on the contrary, the lie was only too conscious and deliberate. The most extraordinary of them was the lie at the bottom of the great Affair of the Stigmata.'

'The stigmata?' I echoed. 'A pious lie, then.'

'Pious.' He nodded. 'That was how she justified it to herself. Though, of course, in her eyes, all her lies were pious lies. Pious, because they served *her* purposes and she was a saint; her cause was sacred. And afterwards, of course, when she 'd treated the lies to her process of imaginative disinfection, they ceased to be lies and fluttered away as snow-white pious truths. But to start with they were undoubtedly pious lies, even for her. The Affair of the Stigmata made that quite clear. I caught her in the act. It all began with a boil that developed on Chawdron's foot.'

'Curious place to have a boil.'

'Not common,' he agreed. 'I once had one there myself, when I was a boy. Most unpleasant, I can assure you. Well, the same thing happened to Chawdron. He and I were down at his country place, playing golf and in the intervals concocting the *Autobiography*. We 'd settle down with brandy and cigars and I 'd gently question him. Left to himself, he was apt to wander and become incoherent and unchronological. I had to canalize his narrative, so to speak. Remarkably frank he was. I learned some curious things about the business world, I can tell you. Needless to say, they 're not in the *Autobiography*. I 'm reserving them for the *Life*. Which means, alas, that nobody will ever know them. Well, as I say, we were down there in the country for a long week-end, Friday to Tuesday. The Fairy had stayed in London. Periodically she took her librarianship very seriously and protested that she simply had to get on with the catalogue. "I have my duties," she said when Chawdron suggested that she should come down to the country with us. "You must let me get on with my duties. I don't think one ought to be just frivolous; do you, Uncle Benny? Besides, I really love my work." God, how she enraged me with that whiny-piny talk! But Chawdron, of course, was touched and enchanted. "What an extraordinary little person she is!" he said to me as we left the house together. Even more extraordinary than you suppose, I thought. He went on rhapsodizing as far as Watford. But in a way, I could see, when we arrived, in a way he was quite pleased she hadn't come. It was a relief to him to be having a little masculine holiday. She had the wit to see that he needed these refreshments from time to time. Well, we duly played our golf, with the result that by Sunday morning poor Chawdron's boil, which had been a negligible little spot on the Friday, had swollen up with the chafing and the exercise into a massive red hemisphere that made walking an agony. Unpleasant, no doubt; but nothing, for any ordinary person, to get seriously upset about. Chawdron, however, wasn't an ordinary person where boils were concerned. He had a carbuncle-complex, a boilophobia. Excusably, perhaps; for it seems that his brother had died of some awful kind of gangrene that had started, to all appearances harmlessly, in a spot on his cheek. Chawdron couldn't develop a pimple without imagining that he 'd caught his brother's disease. This affair on his foot scared him out of his wits. He saw the bone infected, the whole leg rotting away, amputations, death. I offered what comfort and encouragement I could and sent for the local doctor. He came at once and turned out to be a young man, very determined and efficient and confidence-inspiring. The boil was anaesthetized, lanced, cleaned out, tied up. Chawdron was promised there 'd be no complications. And there weren't. The thing healed up quite normally. Chawdron decided to go back to town on the Tuesday, as he 'd arranged. "I wouldn't like to disappoint Fairy," he explained. "She 'd be so sad if I didn't come back when I 'd promised. Besides, she might be nervous. You 've no idea what an intuition that little girl has—almost uncanny, like second sight. She 'd guess something was wrong and be upset; and you know how bad it is for her to be upset." I did indeed; those mystic headaches of hers were the bane of my life. No, no, I agreed. She mustn't be upset. So it was decided that the Fairy should be kept in blissful ignorance of the boil until Chawdron had actually arrived. But the question then arose: how should he arrive? We had gone down into the country in Chawdron's Bugatti. He had a weakness for speed. But it wasn't the car for an invalid. It was arranged that the chauffeur should drive the Bugatti up to town and come back with the Rolls. In the unlikely event of his seeing Miss Spindell, he was not to tell her why he had been sent to town. Those were his orders. The man went and duly returned with the Rolls. Chawdron was installed, almost as though he were in an ambulance, and we rolled majestically up to London. What a homecoming! In anticipation of the sympathy he would get from the Fairy, Chawdron began to have a slight relapse as we approached the house. "I feel it throbbing," he assured me; and when he got out of the car, what a limp! As though he 'd lost a leg at Gallipoli. Really heroic. The butler had to support him up to the drawing-room. He was lowered on to the sofa. "Is Miss Spindell in her room?" The butler thought so. "Then ask her to come down here at once." The man went out; Chawdron closed his eyes—wearily, like a very sick man. He was preparing to get all the sympathy he could and, I could see, luxuriously relishing it in advance. "Still throbbing?" I asked, rather irreverently. He nodded, without opening his eyes. "Still throbbing." The manner was grave and sepulchral. I had to make an effort not to laugh. There was a silence; we waited. And then the door opened. The Fairy appeared. But a maimed Fairy. One foot in a high-heeled shoe, the other in a slipper. Such a limp! "Another leg lost at Gallipoli," thought I. When he heard the door open, Chawdron shut his eyes tighter than ever and turned his face to the wall, or at any rate the back of the sofa. I could see that this rather embarrassed the Fairy. Her entrance had been dramatic; she had meant him to see her disablement at once; hadn't counted on finding a death-bed scene. She had hastily to improvise another piece of stage business, a new set of lines; the scene she had prepared wouldn't do. Which was the more embarrassing for her as I was there, looking on—a very cool spectator, as she knew; not in the least a Maggie Spindell fan. She hesitated a second near the door, hoping Chawdron would look round; but he kept his eyes resolutely shut and his face averted. He 'd evidently decided to play the moribund part for all it was worth. So, after one rather nervous glance at me, she limped across the room to the sofa. "Uncle Benny!" He gave a great start, as though he hadn't known she was there. "Is that you, Fairy?" This was *pianissimo, con espressione.* Then, *molto agitato* from the Fairy: "What is it, Nunky Benny? What is it? Oh, tell me." She was close enough now to lay a hand on his shoulder. "Tell me." He turned his face towards her—the tenderly transfigured burglar. His heart overflowed—"Fairy!"—a slop of hog-wash. "But what 's the matter, Nunky Benny?" "Nothing, Fairy." The tone implied that it was a heroic understatement in the manner of Sir Philip Sidney. "Only my foot." "Your foot!" The Fairy registered such astonishment that we both fairly jumped. "Something wrong with your foot?" "Yes, why not?" Chawdron was rather annoyed; he wasn't getting the kind of sympathy he 'd looked forward to. She turned to me. "But when did it happen, Mr. Tilney?" I was breezy. "A nasty boil," I explained. "Walking round the course did it no good. It had to be lanced on Sunday." "At about half-past eleven on Sunday morning?" "Yes, I suppose it was about half-past eleven," I said, thinking the question was an odd one. "It was just half-past eleven when *this* happened," she said dramatically, pointing to her slippered foot. "What 's 'this'?" asked Chawdron crossly. He was thoroughly annoyed at being swindled out of sympathy. I took pity on the Fairy; things seemed to be going so badly for her. I could see that she had prepared a coup and that it hadn't come off. "Miss Spindell also seems to have hurt her foot," I explained. "You didn't see how she limped." "How did you hurt it?" asked Chawdron. He was still very grumpy. "I was sitting quietly in the library, working at the catalogue," she began: and I guessed, by the way the phrases came rolling out, that she was at last being able to make use of the material she had prepared, "when suddenly, almost exactly at half-past eleven (I remember looking at the clock), I felt a terrible pain in my foot. As though someone were driving a sharp, sharp knife into it. It was so intense that I nearly fainted." She paused for a moment, expecting appropriate comment. But Chawdron wouldn't make it. So I put in a polite "Dear me, most extraordinary!" with which she had to be content. "When I got up," she continued, "I could hardly stand, my foot hurt me so; and I 've been limping ever since. And the most extraordinary thing is that there 's a red mark on my foot, like a scar." Another expectant pause. But still no word from Chawdron. He sat there with his mouth tight shut, and the lines that divided his cheeks from that wide simian upper lip of his were as though engraved in stone. The Fairy looked at him and saw that she had taken hopelessly the wrong line. Was it too late to remedy the mistake? She put the new plan of campaign into immediate execution. "But you poor Nunky Benny!" she began, in the sort of tone in which you 'd talk to a sick dog. "How selfish of me to talk about my ailments, when you 're lying there with your poor foot bandaged up!" The dog began to wag his tail at once. The beatific look returned to his face. He took her hand. I couldn't stand it. "I think I 'd better be going," I said; and I went.'

'But the foot?' I asked. 'The stabbing pain at exactly half-past eleven?'

'You may well ask. As Chawdron himself remarked, when next I saw him, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."' Tilney laughed. 'The Fairy had triumphed. After he 'd had his dose of mother love and Christian charity and kittenish sympathy, he 'd been ready, I suppose, to listen to *her* story. The stabbing pain at eleven-thirty, the red scar. Strange, mysterious, unaccountable. He discussed it all with me, very gravely and judiciously. We talked of spiritualism and telepathy. We distinguished carefully between the miraculous and the supernormal. "As you know," he told me, "I 've been a good Presbyterian all my life, and as such have been inclined to dismiss as mere fabrications all the stories of the Romish saints. I never believed in the story of St. Francis's stigmata, for example. But now I accept it!" Solemn and tremendous pause. "Now I *know* it 's true." I just bowed my head in silence. But the next time I saw M'Crae, the chauffeur, I asked a few questions. Yes, he *had* seen Miss Spindell that day he drove the Bugatti up to London and came back with the Rolls. He 'd gone into the secretaries' office to see if there were any letters to take down for Mr. Chawdron, and Miss Spindell had run into him as he came out. She 'd asked him what he was doing in London and he hadn't been able to think of anything to answer, in spite of Mr. Chawdron's orders, except the truth. It had been on his conscience ever since; he hoped it hadn't done any harm. "On the contrary," I assured him, and that I certainly wouldn't tell Mr. Chawdron. Which I never did. I thought . . . But, good heavens!' he interrupted himself; 'what 's this?' It was Hawtrey, who had come in to lay the table for lunch. She ignored us, actively. It was not only as though we didn't exist; it was as though we also had no right to exist. Tilney took out his watch. 'Twenty past one. God Almighty! Do you mean to say I 've been talking here the whole morning since breakfast?'

'So it appears,' I answered.

He groaned. 'You see,' he said, 'you see what it is to have a gift of the gab. A whole precious morning utterly wasted.'

'Not for me,' I said.

He shrugged his shoulders. 'Perhaps not. But then for you the story was new and curious. Whereas for me it 's known, it 's stale.'

'But for Shakespeare so was the story of Othello, even before he started to write it.'

'Yes, but he *wrote*, he didn't talk. There was something to show for the time he 'd spent. His Othello didn't just disappear into thin air, like my poor Chawdron.' He sighed and was silent. Stone-faced and grim, Hawtrey went rustling starchily round the table; there was a clinking of steel and silver as she laid the places. I waited till she had left the room before I spoke again. When one's servants are more respectable than one is oneself (and nowadays they generally are), one cannot be too careful.

'And how did it end?' I asked.

'How did it end?' he repeated in a voice that had suddenly gone flat and dull; he was bored with his story, wanted to think of something else. 'It ended, so far as I was concerned, with my finishing the *Autobiography* and getting tired of its subject. I gradually faded out of Chawdron's existence. Like the Cheshire Cat.'

'And the Fairy?'

'Faded out of life about a year after the Affair of the Stigmata. She retired to her mystic death-bed once too often. Her pretending came true at last; it was always the risk with her. She really did die.'

The door opened; Hawtrey re-entered the room, carrying a dish.

'And Chawdron, I suppose, was inconsolable?' Inconsolability is, happily, a respectable subject.

Tilney nodded. 'Took to spiritualism, of course. Nemesis again.'

Hawtrey raised the lid of the dish; a smell of fried soles escaped into the air. 'Luncheon is served,' she said, with what seemed to me an ill-concealed contempt and disapproval.

'Luncheon is served,' Tilney echoed, moving towards his place. He sat down and opened his napkin. 'One meal after another, punctually, day after day, day after day. Such is life. Which would be tolerable enough if something ever got done between meals. But in my case nothing does. Meal after meal, and between meals a vacuum, a kind of——' Hawtrey, who had been offering him the *sauce tartare* for the past several seconds, here gave him the discreetest nudge. Tilney turned his head. 'Ah, thank you,' he said, and helped himself.

*From* BRIEF CANDLES

# THE REST CURE

SHE was a tiny woman, dark-haired, and with grey-blue eyes, very large and arresting in a small pale face. A little girl's face, with small, delicate features, but worn—prematurely; for Mrs. Tarwin was only twenty-eight; and the big, wide-open eyes were restless and unquietly bright. 'Moira 's got nerves,' her husband would explain when people inquired why she wasn't with him. Nerves that couldn't stand the strain of London or New York. She had to take things quietly in Florence. A sort of rest cure. 'Poor darling!' he would add in a voice that had suddenly become furry with sentiment; and he would illuminate his ordinarily rather blankly intelligent face with one of those lightning smiles of his—so wistful and tender and charming. Almost too charming, one felt uncomfortably. He turned on the charm and the wistfulness like electricity. Click! his face was briefly illumined. And then, click! the light went out again and he was once more the blankly intelligent research student. Cancer was his subject.

Poor Moira! Those nerves of hers! She was full of caprices and obsessions. For example, when she leased the villa on the slopes of Bellosguardo, she wanted to be allowed to cut down the cypresses at the end of the garden. 'So terribly like a cemetery,' she kept repeating to old Signor Bargioni. Old Bargioni was charming, but firm. He had no intention of sacrificing his cypresses. They gave the finishing touch of perfection to the loveliest view in all Florence; from the best bedroom window you saw the dome and Giotto's tower framed between their dark columns. Inexhaustibly loquacious, he tried to persuade her that cypresses weren't really at all funereal. For the Etruscans, on the contrary (he invented this little piece of archaeology on the spur of the moment), the cypress was a symbol of joy; the feasts of the vernal equinox concluded with dances round the sacred tree. Boecklin, it was true, had planted cypresses on his Island of the Dead. But then Boecklin, after all . . . And if she really found the trees depressing, she could plant nasturtiums to climb up them. Or roses. Roses, which the Greeks——

'All right, all right,' said Moira Tarwin hastily. 'Let 's leave the cypresses.'

That voice, that endless flow of culture and foreign English! Old Bargioni was really terrible. She would have screamed if she had had to listen a moment longer. She yielded in mere self-defence.

'*E la Tarwinnè?*' questioned Signora Bargioni when her husband came home.

He shrugged his shoulders. '*Una donnina piuttosto sciocca*,' was his verdict.

Rather silly. Old Bargioni was not the only man who had thought so. But he was one of the not so many who regarded her silliness as a fault. Most of the men who knew her were charmed by it; they adored while they smiled. In conjunction with that tiny stature, those eyes, that delicate childish face, her silliness inspired avuncular devotions and protective loves. She had a faculty for making men feel, by contrast, agreeably large, superior, and intelligent. And as luck, or perhaps as ill luck, would have it, Moira had passed her life among men who were really intelligent and what is called superior. Old Sir Watney Croker, her grandfather, with whom she had lived ever since she was five (for her father and mother had both died young), was one of the most eminent physicians of his day. His early monograph on duodenal ulcers remains even now the classical work on the subject. Between one duodenal ulcer and another Sir Watney found leisure to adore and indulge and spoil his little granddaughter. Along with fly-fishing and metaphysics she was his hobby. Time passed; Moira grew up, chronologically; but Sir Watney went on treating her as a spoilt child, went on being enchanted by her birdy chirrupings and ingenuousnesses and impertinent *enfant-terrible-isms*. He encouraged, he almost compelled her to preserve her childishness. Keeping her a baby in spite of her age amused him. He loved her babyish and could only love her so. All those duodenal ulcers—perhaps they had done something to his sensibility, warped it a little, kept it somehow stunted and un-adult, like Moira herself. In the depths of his unspecialized, unprofessional being Sir Watney was a bit of a baby himself. Too much preoccupation with the duodenum had prevented this neglected instinctive part of him from fully growing up. Like gravitates to like; old baby Watney loved the baby in Moira and wanted to keep the young woman permanently childish. Most of his friends shared Sir Watney's tastes. Doctors, judges, professors, civil servants—every member of Sir Watney's circle was professionally eminent, a veteran specialist. To be asked to one of his dinner parties was a privilege. On these august occasions Moira had always, from the age of seventeen, been present, the only woman at the table. Not really a woman, Sir Watney explained; a child. The veteran specialists were all her indulgent uncles. The more childish she was, the better they liked her. Moira gave them pet names. Professor Stagg, for example, the neo-Hegelian, was Uncle Bonzo; Mr. Justice Gidley was Giddy Goat. And so on. When they teased, she answered back impertinently. How they laughed! When they started to discuss the Absolute or Britain's Industrial Future, she interjected some deliciously irrelevant remark that made them laugh even more heartily. Exquisite! And the next day the story would be told to colleagues in the law-courts or the hospital, to cronies at the Athenaeum. In learned and professional circles Moira enjoyed a real celebrity. In the end she had ceased not only to be a woman; she had almost ceased to be a child. She was hardly more than their mascot.

At half-past nine she left the dining-room, and the talk would come back to ulcers and Reality and Emergent Evolution.

'One would like to keep her as a pet,' John Tarwin had said as the door closed behind her on that first occasion he dined at Sir Watney's.

Professor Broadwater agreed. There was a little silence. It was Tarwin who broke it.

'What 's your feeling,' he asked, leaning forward with that expression of blank intelligence on his eager, sharp-featured face, 'what 's *your* feeling about the validity of experiments with artificially grafted tumours as opposed to natural tumours?'

Tarwin was only thirty-three and looked even younger among Sir Watney's veterans. He had already done good work, Sir Watney explained to his assembled guests before the young man's arrival, and might be expected to do much more. An interesting fellow too. Had been all over the place—tropical Africa, India, North and South America. Well off. Not tied to an academic job to earn his living. Had worked here in London, in Germany, at the Rockefeller Institute in New York, in Japan. Enviable opportunities. A great deal to be said for a private income. 'Ah, here you are, Tarwin. Good evening. No, not at all late. This is Mr. Justice Gidley, Professor Broadwater, Professor Stagg, and—bless me! I hadn't noticed you, Moira; you 're really too ultra-microscopic—my granddaughter.' Tarwin smiled down at her. She was really ravishing.

Well, now they had been married five years, Moira was thinking, as she powdered her face in front of the looking-glass. Tonino was coming to tea; she had been changing her frock. Through the window behind the mirror one looked down between the cypress trees on to Florence—a jumble of brown roofs, and above them, in the midst, the marble tower and the huge, upleaping, airy dome. Five years. It was John's photograph in the leather travelling-frame that made her think of their marriage. Why did she keep it there on the dressing-table? Force of habit, she supposed. It wasn't as though the photograph reminded her of days that had been particularly happy. On the contrary. There was something, she now felt, dishonest about keeping it there. Pretending to love him when she didn't. . . . She looked at it again. The profile was sharp and eager. The keen young research student intently focused on a tumour. She really liked him better as a research student than when he was having a soul, or being a poet or a lover. It seemed a dreadful thing to say—but there it was: the research student was of better quality than the human being.

She had always known it—or, rather, not known, felt it. The human being had always made her rather uncomfortable. The more human, the more uncomfortable. She oughtn't ever to have married him, of course. But he asked so persistently; and then he had so much vitality; everybody spoke so well of him; she rather liked his looks; and he seemed to lead such a jolly life, travelling about the world; and she was tired of being a mascot for her grandfather's veterans. There were any number of such little reasons. Added together, she had fancied they would be the equivalent of the one big, cogent reason. But they weren't, she had made a mistake.

Yes, the more human, the more uncomfortable. The disturbing way he turned on the beautiful illumination of his smile! Turned it on suddenly, only to switch it off again with as little warning when something really serious, like cancer or philosophy, had to be discussed. And then his voice, when he was talking about Nature, or Love, or God, or something of that sort—furry with feeling! The quite unnecessarily moved and tremulous way he said Good-bye! 'Like a Landseer dog,' she told him once, before they were married, laughing and giving a ludicrous imitation of his too heart-felt 'Good-bye, Moira.' The mockery hurt him. John prided himself as much on his soul and his feelings as upon his intellect; as much on his appreciation of Nature and his poetical love-longings as upon his knowledge of tumours. Goethe was his favourite literary and historical character. Poet and man of science, deep thinker and ardent lover, artist in thought and in life—John saw himself in the rich part. He made her read *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister*. Moira did her best to feign the enthusiasm she did not feel. Privately she thought Goethe a humbug.

'I oughtn't to have married him,' she said to her image in the glass, and shook her head.

John was the pet-fancier as well as the loving educator. There were times when Moira's childishnesses delighted him as much as they had delighted Sir Watney and his veterans, when he laughed at every naïveté or impertinence she uttered, as though it were a piece of the most exquisite wit; and not only laughed, but drew public attention to it, led her on into fresh infantilities and repeated the stories of her exploits to any one who was prepared to listen to them. He was less enthusiastic, however, when Moira had been childish at his expense, when her silliness had in any way compromised *his* dignity or interests. On these occasions he lost his temper, called her a fool, told her she ought to be ashamed of herself. After which, controlling himself, he would become grave, paternal, pedagogic. Moira would be made to feel, miserably, that she wasn't worthy of him. And finally he switched on the smile and made it all up with caresses that left her like a stone.

'And to think,' she reflected, putting away her powder-puff, 'to think of my spending all that time and energy trying to keep up with him.'

All those scientific papers she had read, those outlines of medicine and physiology, those text-books of something or other (she couldn't even remember the name of the science), to say nothing of all that dreary stuff by Goethe! And then all the going out when she had a headache or was tired! All the meeting of people who bored her, but who were really, according to John, so interesting and important! All the travelling, the terribly strenuous sightseeing, the calling on distinguished foreigners and their generally less distinguished wives! It was difficult for her to keep up even physically—her legs were so short and John was always in such a hurry. Mentally, in spite of all her efforts, she was always a hundred miles behind.

'Awful!' she said aloud.

Her whole marriage had really been awful. From that awful honeymoon at Capri, when he had made her walk too far, too fast, uphill, only to read her extracts from Wordsworth when they reached the *Aussichtspunkt*; when he had talked to her about love and made it, much too frequently, and told her the Latin names of the plants and butterflies—from that awful honeymoon to the time, when four months ago, her nerves had gone all to pieces and the doctor had said that she must take things quietly, apart from John. Awful! The life had nearly killed her. And it wasn't (she had come at last to realize), it wasn't really a life at all. It was just a galvanic activity, like the twitching of a dead frog's leg when you touch the nerve with an electrified wire. Not life, just galvanized death.

She remembered the last of their quarrels, just before the doctor had told her to go away. John had been sitting at her feet, with his head against her knee. And his head was beginning to go bald! She could hardly bear to look at those long hairs plastered across the scalp. And because he was tired with all that microscope work, tired and at the same time (not having made love to her, thank goodness! for more than a fortnight) amorous, as she could tell by the look in his eyes, he was being very sentimental and talking in his furriest voice about Love and Beauty and the necessity for being like Goethe. Talking till she felt like screaming aloud. And at last she could bear it no longer.

'For goodness' sake, John,' she said in a voice that was on the shrill verge of being out of control, 'be quiet!'

'What *is* the matter?' He looked up at her questioningly, pained.

'Talking like that!' She was indignant. 'But you 've never loved anybody, outside yourself. Nor felt the beauty of anything. Any more than that old humbug Goethe. You know what you *ought* to feel when there 's a woman about, or a landscape; you know what the best people feel. And you deliberately set yourself to feel the same, out of your head.'

John was wounded to the quick of his vanity. 'How can you say that?'

'Because it 's true, it 's true. You only live out of your head. And it 's a bald head too,' she added, and began to laugh, uncontrollably.

What a scene there had been! She went on laughing all the time he raged at her; she couldn't stop.

'You 're hysterical,' he said at last; and then he calmed down. The poor child was ill. With an effort he switched on the expression of paternal tenderness and went to fetch the sal volatile.

One last dab at her lips, and there! she was ready. She went downstairs to the drawing-room, to find that Tonino had already arrived—he was always early—and was waiting. He rose as she entered, bowed over her outstretched hand, and kissed it. Moira was always charmed by his florid, rather excessive Southern good manners. John was always too busy being the keen research student or the furry-voiced poet to have good manners. He didn't think politeness particularly important. It was the same with clothes. He was chronically ill dressed. Tonino, on the other hand, was a model of dapper elegance. That pale grey suit, that lavender-coloured tie, those piebald shoes of white kid and patent leather—marvellous!

One of the pleasures or dangers of foreign travel is that you lose your class-consciousness. At home you can never, with the best will in the world, forget it. Habit has rendered your own people as immediately legible as your own language. A word, a gesture are sufficient; your man is placed. But in foreign parts your fellows are unreadable. The less obvious products of upbringing—all the subtler refinements, the finer shades of vulgarity—escape your notice. The accent, the inflexion of voice, the vocabulary, the gestures, tell you nothing. Between the duke and the insurance clerk, the profiteer and the country gentleman, your inexperienced eye and ear detect no difference. For Moira, Tonino seemed the characteristic flower of Italian gentility. She knew, of course, that he wasn't well off; but then, plenty of the nicest people are poor. She saw in him the equivalent of one of those younger sons of impoverished English squires—the sort of young man who advertises for work in the Agony Column of *The Times*. 'Public School education, sporting tastes; would accept any well-paid position of trust and confidence.' She would have been pained, indignant, and surprised to hear old Bargioni describing him, after their first meeting, as '*il tipo del parrucchiere napoletano*'—the typical Neapolitan barber. Signora Bargioni shook her head over the approaching scandal and was secretly delighted.

As a matter of actual fact Tonino was not a barber. He was the son of a capitalist—on a rather small scale, no doubt; but still a genuine capitalist. Vasari senior owned a restaurant at Pozzuoli and was ambitious to start an hotel. Tonino had been sent to study the tourist industry with a family friend who was the manager of one of the best establishments in Florence. When he had learnt all the secrets, he was to return to Pozzuoli and be the managing director of the rejuvenated boarding-house which his father was modestly proposing to rechristen the Grand Hotel Ritz-Carlton. Meanwhile, he was an underworked lounger in Florence. He had made Mrs. Tarwin's acquaintance romantically, on the highway. Driving, as was her custom, alone, Moira had run over a nail. A puncture. Nothing is easier than changing wheels—nothing, that is to say, if you have sufficient muscular strength to undo the nuts which hold the punctured wheel to its axle. Moira had not. When Tonino came upon her, ten minutes after the mishap, she was sitting on her running-board of the car, flushed and dishevelled with her efforts, and in tears.

'*Una signora forestiera.*' At the café that evening Tonino recounted his adventure with a certain rather fatuous self-satisfaction. In the small bourgeoisie in which he had been brought up, a Foreign Lady was an almost fabulous creature, a being of legendary wealth, eccentricity, independence. '*Inglese,*' he specified. '*Giovane,*' and '*bella, bellissima.*' His auditors were incredulous; beauty, for some reason, is not common among the specimens of English womanhood seen in foreign parts. '*Ricca,*' he added. That sounded less intrinsically improbable; foreign ladies were all rich, almost by definition. Juicily, and with unction, Tonino described the car she drove, the luxurious villa she inhabited.

Acquaintance had ripened quickly into friendship. This was the fourth or fifth time in a fortnight that he had come to the house.

'A few poor flowers,' said the young man in a tone of soft, ingratiating apology; and he brought forward his left hand, which he had been hiding behind his back. It held a bouquet of white roses.

'But how kind of you!' she cried in her bad Italian. 'How lovely!' John never brought flowers to any one; he regarded that sort of thing as rather nonsensical. She smiled at Tonino over the blossoms. 'Thank you a thousand times.'

Making a deprecating gesture, he returned her smile. His teeth flashed pearly and even. His large eyes were bright, dark, liquid, and rather expressionless, like a gazelle's. He was exceedingly good-looking. 'White roses for the white rose,' he said.

Moira laughed. The compliment was ridiculous; but it pleased all the same.

Paying compliments was not the only thing Tonino could do. He knew how to be useful. When, a few days later, Moira decided to have the rather dingy hall and dining-room re-distempered, he was invaluable. It was he who haggled with the decorator, he who made scenes when there were delays, he who interpreted Moira's rather special notions about colours to the workmen, he who superintended their activities.

'If it hadn't been for you,' said Moira gratefully, when the work was finished, 'I 'd have been hopelessly swindled and they wouldn't have done anything properly.'

It was such a comfort, she reflected, having a man about the place who didn't always have something more important to do and think about; a man who could spend his time being useful and a help. Such a comfort! And such a change! When she was with John, it was she who had to do all the tiresome, practical things. John always had his work, and his work took precedence of everything, including her convenience. Tonino was just an ordinary man, with nothing in the least superhuman about either himself or his functions. It was a great relief.

Little by little Moira came to rely on him for everything. He made himself universally useful. The fuses blew out; it was Tonino who replaced them. The hornets nested in the drawing-room chimney; heroically Tonino stank them out with sulphur. But his speciality was domestic economy. Brought up in a restaurant, he knew everything there was to be known about food and drink and prices. When the meat was unsatisfactory, he went to the butcher and threw the tough beefsteak in his teeth, almost literally. He beat down the extortionate charges of the greengrocer. With a man at the fish market he made a friendly arrangement whereby Moira was to have the pick of the soles and the red mullet. He bought her wine for her, her oil—wholesale, in huge glass demijohns; and Moira, who since Sir Watney's death could have afforded to drink nothing cheaper than Pol Roger 1911 and do her cooking in imported yak's butter, exulted with him in long domestic conversations over economies of a farthing a quart or a shilling or two on a hundredweight. For Tonino the price and the quality of victuals and drink were matters of gravest importance. To secure a flask of Chianti for five lire ninety instead of six lire was, in his eyes, a real victory; and the victory became a triumph if it could be proved that the Chianti was fully three years old and had an alcohol content of more than fourteen per cent. By nature Moira was neither greedy nor avaricious. Her upbringing had confirmed her in her natural tendencies. She had the disinterestedness of those who have never known a shortage of cash; and her abstemious indifference to the pleasures of the table had never been tempered by the housewife's preoccupation with other people's appetites and digestions. Never; for Sir Watney had kept a professional housekeeper, and with John Tarwin, who anyhow hardly noticed what he ate, and thought that women ought to spend their time doing more important and intellectual things than presiding over kitchens, she had lived for the greater part of their married life in hotels or service flats, or else in furnished rooms and in a chronic state of picnic. Tonino revealed to her the world of markets and the kitchen. Still accustomed to thinking, with John, that ordinary domestic life wasn't good enough, she laughed at first at his earnest preoccupation with meat and halfpence. But after a little she began to be infected by his almost religious enthusiasm for housekeeping; she began to discover that meat and halfpence were interesting after all, that they were real and important—much more real and important, for example, than reading Goethe when one found him a bore and a humbug. Tenderly brooded over by the most competent of solicitors and brokers, the late Sir Watney's fortune was bringing in a steady five per cent free of tax. But in Tonino's company Moira could forget her bank balance. Descending from the financial Sinai on which she had been lifted so high above the common earth, she discovered, with him, the preoccupations of poverty. They were curiously interesting and exciting.

'The prices they ask for fish in Florence!' said Tonino, after a silence, when he had exhausted the subject of white roses. 'When I think how little we pay for octopus at Naples! It 's scandalous.'

'Scandalous!' echoed Moira with an indignation as genuine as his own. They talked, interminably.

Next day the sky was no longer blue, but opaquely white. There was no sunshine, only a diffused glare that threw no shadows. The landscape lay utterly lifeless under the dead and fishy stare of heaven. It was very hot, there was no wind, the air was hardly breathable and as though woolly. Moira woke up with a headache, and her nerves seemed to have an uneasy life of their own, apart from hers. Like caged birds they were, fluttering and starting and twittering at every alarm; and her aching, tired body was their aviary. Quite against her own wish and intention she found herself in a temper with the maid and saying the unkindest things. She had to give her a pair of stockings to make up for it. When she was dressed, she wanted to write some letters; but her fountain-pen made a stain on her fingers and she was so furious that she threw the beastly thing out of the window. It broke to pieces on the flagstones below. She had nothing to write with; it was too exasperating. She washed the ink off her hands and took out her embroidery frame. But her fingers were all thumbs. And then she pricked herself with the needle. Oh, so painfully! The tears came into her eyes; she began to cry. And having begun, she couldn't stop. Assunta came in five minutes later and found her sobbing. 'But what is it, signora?' she asked, made most affectionately solicitous by the gift of the stockings. Moira shook her head. 'Go away,' she said brokenly. The girl was insistent. 'Go away,' Moira repeated. How could she explain what was the matter when the only thing that had happened was that she had pricked her finger? Nothing was the matter. And yet everything was the matter, everything.

The everything that was the matter resolved itself finally into the weather. Even in the best of health Moira had always been painfully conscious of the approach of thunder. Her jangled nerves were more than ordinarily sensitive. The tears and furies and despairs of this horrible day had a purely meteorological cause. But they were none the less violent and agonizing for that. The hours passed dismally. Thickened by huge black clouds, the twilight came on in a sultry and expectant silence, and it was prematurely night. The reflection of distant lightnings, flashing far away below the horizon, illuminated the eastern sky. The peaks and ridges of the Apennines stood out black against the momentary pale expanses of silvered vapour and disappeared again in silence; the attentive hush was still unbroken. With a kind of sinking apprehension—for she was terrified of storms—Moira sat at her window, watching the black hill leap out against the silver and die again, leap out and die. The flashes brightened; and then, for the first time, she heard the approaching thunder, far off and faint like the whisper of the sea in a shell. Moira shuddered. The clock in the hall struck nine, and, as though the sound were a signal prearranged, a gust of wind suddenly shook the magnolia tree that stood at the crossing of the paths in the garden below. Its long stiff leaves rattled together like scales of horn. There was another flash. In the brief white glare she could see the two funereal cypresses writhing and tossing as though in the desperate agitation of pain. And then all at once the storm burst catastrophically, it seemed directly overhead. At the savage violence of that icy downpour Moira shrank back and shut the window. A streak of white fire zigzagged fearfully just behind the cypresses. The immediate thunder was like the splitting and fall of a solid vault. Moira rushed away from the window and threw herself on the bed. She covered her face with her hands. Through the continuous roaring of the rain the thunder crashed and reverberated, crashed again and sent the fragments of sound rolling unevenly in all directions through the night. The whole house trembled. In the window-frames the shaken glasses rattled like the panes of an old omnibus rolling across the cobbles.

'Oh, God, oh, God,' Moira kept repeating. In the enormous tumult her voice was small and, as it were, naked, utterly abject.

'But it's too stupid to be frightened.' She remembered John's voice, his brightly encouraging, superior manner. 'The chances are thousands to one against your being struck. And, anyhow, hiding your head won't prevent the lightning from——'

How she hated him for being so reasonable and right! 'Oh, God!' There was another. 'God, God, God——'

And then suddenly a terrible thing happened; the light went out. Through her closed eyelids she saw no longer the red of translucent blood, but utter blackness. Uncovering her face, she opened her eyes and anxiously looked round—on blackness again. She fumbled for the switch by her bed, found it turned and turned; the darkness remained impenetrable.

'Assunta!' she called.

And all at once the square of the window was a suddenly uncovered picture of the garden, seen against a background of mauve-white sky and shining, downpouring rain.

'Assunta!' Her voice was drowned in a crash that seemed to have exploded in the very roof. 'Assunta, Assunta!' In a panic she stumbled across the grave-dark room to the door. Another flash revealed the handle. She opened. 'Assunta!'

Her voice was hollow above the black gulf of the stairs. The thunder exploded again above her. With a crash and a tinkle of broken glass one of the windows in her room burst open. A blast of cold wind lifted her hair. A flight of papers rose from her writing-table and whirled with crackling wings through the darkness. One touched her cheek like a living thing and was gone. She screamed aloud. The door slammed behind her. She ran down the stairs in terror, as though the fiend were at her heels. In the hall she met Assunta and the cook coming towards her, lighting matches as they came.

'Assunta, the lights!' She clutched the girl's arm.

Only the thunder answered. When the noise subsided, Assunta explained that the fuses had all blown out and that there wasn't a candle in the house. Not a single candle, and only one more box of matches.

'But then we shall be left in the dark,' said Moira hysterically.

Through the three blackly reflecting windows of the hall three separate pictures of the streaming garden revealed themselves and vanished. The old Venetian mirrors on the walls blinked for an instant into life, like dead eyes briefly opened.

'In the dark,' she repeated with an almost mad insistence.

'Aie!' cried Assunta, and dropped the match that had begun to burn her fingers. The thunder fell on them out of a darkness made denser and more hopeless by the loss of light.

When the telephone bell rang, Tonino was sitting in the managerial room of his hotel, playing cards with the proprietor's two sons and another friend. 'Someone to speak to you, Signor Tonino,' said the under-porter, looking in. 'A lady.' He grinned significantly.

Tonino put on a dignified air and left the room. When he returned a few minutes later, he held his hat in one hand and was buttoning up his rain-coat with the other.

'Sorry,' he said. 'I 've got to go out.'

'Go out?' exclaimed the others incredulously. Beyond the shuttered windows the storm roared like a cataract and savagely exploded. 'But where?' they asked. 'Why? Are you mad?'

Tonino shrugged his shoulders, as though it were nothing to go out into a tornado, as though he were used to it. The *signora forestiera,* he explained, hating them for their inquisitiveness; the Tarwin—she had asked him to go up to Bellosguardo at once. The fuses . . . not a candle in the house . . . utterly in the dark . . . very agitated . . . nerves. . . .

'But on a night like this. . . . But you 're not the electrician.' The two sons of the proprietor spoke in chorus. They felt, indignantly, that Tonino was letting himself be exploited.

But the third young man leaned back in his chair and laughed. '*Vai, caro, vai,*' he said, and then, shaking his finger at Tonino knowingly, '*Ma fatti pagare per il tuo lavoro,*' he added. 'Get yourself paid for your trouble.' Berto was notoriously the lady-killer, the tried specialist in amorous strategy, the acknowledged expert. 'Take the opportunity.' The others joined in his rather unpleasant laughter. Tonino also grinned and nodded.

The taxi rushed splashing through the wet deserted streets like a travelling fountain. Tonino sat in the darkness of the cab ruminating Berto's advice. She was pretty, certainly. But somehow—why was it?—it had hardly occurred to him to think of her as a possible mistress. He had been politely gallant with her—on principle almost, and by force of habit—but without really wanting to succeed; and when she had shown herself unresponsive, he hadn't cared. But perhaps he ought to have cared, perhaps he ought to have tried harder. In Berto's world it was a sporting duty to do one's best to seduce every woman one could. The most admirable man was the man with the greatest number of women to his credit. Really lovely, Tonino went on to himself, trying to work up an enthusiasm for the sport. It would be a triumph to be proud of. The more so as she was a foreigner. And very rich. He thought with inward satisfaction of that big car, of the house, the servants, the silver. '*Certo,*' he said to himself complacently, '*mi vuol bene.*' She liked him; there was no doubt of it. Meditatively he stroked his smooth face; the muscles stirred a little under his fingers. He was smiling to himself in the darkness; naïvely, an ingenuous prostitute's smile. '*Moira,*' he said aloud. '*Moira. Strano, quel nome. Piuttosto ridicolo.*'

It was Moira who opened the door for him. She had been standing at the window, looking out, waiting and waiting.

'Tonino!' She held out both her hands to him; she had never felt so glad to see any one.

The sky went momentarily whitish-mauve behind him as he stood there in the open doorway. The skirts of his rain-coat fluttered in the wind; a wet gust blew past him, chilling her face. The sky went black again. He slammed the door behind him. They were in utter darkness.

'Tonino, it was too sweet of you to have come. Really too——'

The thunder that interrupted her was like the end of the world. Moira shuddered. 'Oh, God!' she whimpered; and then suddenly she was pressing her face against his waistcoat and crying, and Tonino was holding her and stroking her hair. The next flash showed him the position of the sofa. In the ensuing darkness he carried her across the room, sat down, and began to kiss her tear-wet face. She lay quite still in his arms, relaxed, like a frightened child that has at last found comfort. Tonino held her, kissing her softly again and again. '*Ti amo, Moira,*' he whispered. And it was true. Holding her, touching her in the dark, he did love her. '*Ti amo.*' How profoundly! '*Ti voglio un bene immenso,*' he went on, with a passion, a deep warm tenderness born almost suddenly of darkness and soft blind contact. Heavy and warm with life, she lay pressed against him. Her body curved and was solid under his hands, her cheeks were rounded and cool, her eyelids rounded and tremulous and tear-wet, her mouth so soft, so soft under his touching lips. '*Ti amo, ti amo.*' He was breathless with love, and it was as though there were a hollowness at the centre of his being, a void of desiring tenderness that longed to be filled, that could only be filled by her, an emptiness that drew her towards him, into him, that drank her as an empty vessel eagerly drinks the water. Still, with closed eyes, quite still she lay there in his arms, suffering herself to be drunk up by his tenderness, to be drawn into the yearning vacancy of his heart, happy in being passive, in yielding herself to his soft insistent passion.

'*Fatti pagare, fatti pagare.*' The memory of Berto's words transformed him suddenly from a lover into an amorous sportsman with a reputation to keep up and records to break. '*Fatti pagare.*' He risked a more intimate caress. But Moira winced so shudderingly at the touch that he desisted, ashamed of himself.

'*Ebbene,*' asked Berto when, an hour later, he returned, 'did you mend the fuses?'

'Yes, I mended the fuses.'

'And did you get yourself paid?'

Tonino smiled an amorous sportsman's smile. 'A little on account,' he answered, and at once disliked himself for having spoken the words, disliked the others for laughing at them. Why did he go out of his way to spoil something which had been so beautiful? Pretexting a headache, he went upstairs to his bedroom. The storm had passed on, the moon was shining now out of a clear sky. He opened the window and looked out. A river of ink and quicksilver, the Arno flowed whispering past. In the street below the puddles shone like living eyes. The ghost of Caruso was singing from a gramophone, far away on the other side of the water. '*Stretti, stretti, nell' estasi d'amor. . . .*' Tonino was profoundly moved.

The sky was blue next morning, the sunlight glittered on the shiny leaves of the magnolia tree, the air was demurely windless. Sitting at her dressing-table, Moira looked out and wondered incredulously if such things as storms were possible. But the plants were broken and prostrate in their beds; the paths were strewn with scattered leaves and petals. In spite of the soft air and the sunlight, last night's horrors had been more than a bad dream. Moira sighed and began to brush her hair. Set in its leather frame, John Tarwin's profile confronted her, brightly focused on imaginary tumours. Her eyes fixed on it, Moira went on mechanically brushing her hair. Then, suddenly, interrupting the rhythm of her movements, she got up, took the leather frame, and, walking across the room, threw it up, out of sight, on to the top of the high wardrobe. There! She returned to her seat and, filled with a kind of frightened elation, went on with her interrupted brushing.

When she was dressed, she drove down to the town and spent an hour at Settepassi's, the jewellers. When she left, she was bowed out on to the Lungarno like a princess.

'No, don't smoke those,' she said to Tonino that afternoon as he reached for a cigarette in the silver box that stood on the drawing-room mantelpiece. 'I 've got a few of those Egyptian ones you like. Got them specially for you.' And, smiling, she handed him a little parcel.

Tonino thanked her profusely—too profusely, as was his custom. But when he had stripped away the paper and saw the polished gold of a large cigarette-case, he could only look at her in an embarrassed and inquiring amazement.

'Don't you think it 's rather pretty?' she asked.

'Marvellous! But is it——' He hesitated. 'Is it for me?'

Moira laughed with pleasure at his embarrassment. She had never seen him embarrassed before. He was always the self-possessed young man of the world, secure and impregnable within his armour of Southern good manners. She admired that elegant carapace. But it amused her for once to take him without it, to see him at a loss, blushing and stammering like a little boy. It amused and it pleased her; she liked him all the more for being the little boy as well as the polished and socially competent young man.

'For me?' she mimicked, laughing. 'Do you like it?' Her tone changed; she became grave. 'I wanted you to have something to remind you of last night.' Tonino took her hands and silently kissed them. She had received him with such off-handed gaiety, so nonchalantly, as though nothing had happened, that the tender references to last night's happenings (so carefully prepared as he walked up the hill) had remained unspoken. He had been afraid of saying the wrong thing and offending her. But now the spell was broken—and by Moira herself. 'One oughtn't to forget one's good actions,' Moira went on, abandoning him her hands. 'Each time you take a cigarette out of this case, will you remember how kind and good you were to a silly and ridiculous little fool?'

Tonino had had time to recover his manners. 'I shall remember the most adorable, the most beautiful——' Still holding her hands, he looked at her for a moment in silence, eloquently. Moira smiled back at him. 'Moira!' And she was in his arms. She shut her eyes and was passive in the strong circle of his arms, soft and passive against his firm body. 'I love you, Moira.' The breath of his whispering was warm on her cheek. '*Ti amo.*' And suddenly his lips were on hers again, violently, impatiently kissing. Between the kisses his whispered words came passionate to her ears. '*Ti amo pazzamente . . . piccina . . . tesoro . . . amore . . . cuore . . .*' Uttered in Italian, his love seemed somehow specially strong and deep. Things described in a strange language themselves take on a certain strangeness. '*Amami, Moira, amami. Mi ami un po?*' He was insistent. 'A little, Moira—do you love me a little?'

She opened her eyes and looked at him. Then, with a quick movement, she took his face between her two hands, drew it down, and kissed him on the mouth. 'Yes,' she whispered, 'I love you.' And then, gently, she pushed him away. Tonino wanted to kiss her again. But Moira shook her head and slipped away from him. 'No, no,' she said with a kind of peremptory entreaty. 'Don't spoil it all now.'

The days passed, hot and golden. Summer approached. The nightingales sang unseen in the cool of the evening.

'*L'usignuolo,*' Moira whispered softly to herself as she listened to the singing. '*L'usignuolo.*' Even the nightingales were subtly better in Italian. The sun had set. They were sitting in the little summer-house at the end of the garden, looking out over the darkening landscape. The white-walled farms and villas on the slope below stood out almost startlingly clear against the twilight of the olive trees, as though charged with some strange and novel significance. Moira sighed. 'I 'm so happy,' she said; Tonino took her hand. 'Ridiculously happy.' For, after all, she was thinking, it *was* rather ridiculous to be so happy for no valid reason. John Tarwin had taught her to imagine that one could only be happy when one was doing something 'interesting' (as he put it), or associating with people who were 'worth while.' Tonino was nobody in particular, thank goodness! And going for picnics wasn't exactly 'interesting' in John's sense of the word; nor was talking about the respective merits of different brands of car; nor teaching him to drive; nor going shopping; nor discussing the problem of new curtains for the drawing-room; nor, for that matter, sitting in the summer-house and saying nothing. In spite of which, or because of which, she was happy with an unprecedented happiness. 'Ridiculously happy,' she repeated.

Tonino kissed her hand. 'So am I,' he said. And he was not merely being polite. In his own way he was genuinely happy with her. People envied him sitting in that magnificent yellow car at her side. She was so pretty and elegant, so foreign too; he was proud to be seen about with her. And then the cigarette-case, the gold-mounted, agate-handled cane she had given him for his birthday. . . . Besides, he was really very fond of her, really, in an obscure way, in love with her. It was not for nothing that he had held and caressed her in the darkness of that night of thunder. Something of that deep and passionate tenderness, born suddenly of the night and their warm sightless contact, still remained in him—still remained even after the physical longings she then inspired had been vicariously satisfied. (And under Berto's knowing guidance they *had* been satisfied, frequently.) If it hadn't been for Berto's satirical comments on the still platonic nature of his attachment, he would have been perfectly content.

'*Alle donne*,' Berto sententiously generalized, '*piace sempre la violenza*. They long to be raped. You don't know how to make love, my poor boy.' And he would hold up his own achievements as examples to be followed. For Berto, love was a kind of salacious vengeance on women for the crime of their purity.

Spurred on by his friend's mockeries, Tonino made another attempt to exact full payment for his mending of the fuses on the night of the storm. But his face was so soundly slapped, and the tone in which Moira threatened never to see him again unless he behaved himself was so convincingly stern, that he did not renew his attack. He contented himself with looking sad and complaining of her cruelty. But in spite of his occasionally long face he was happy with her. Happy like a fireside cat. The car, the house, her elegant foreign prettiness, the marvellous presents she gave him, kept him happily purring.

The days passed and the weeks. Moira would have liked life to flow on like this for ever, a gay bright stream with occasional reaches of calm sentimentality but never dangerously deep or turbulent, without fall or whirl or rapid. She wanted her existence to remain for ever what it was at this moment—a kind of game with a pleasant and emotionally exciting companion, a playing at living and loving. If only this happy play-time could last for ever!

It was John Tarwin who decreed that it should not. 'ATTENDING CYTOLOGICAL CONGRESS ROME WILL STOP FEW DAYS ON WAY ARRIVING THURSDAY LOVE JOHN.' That was the text of the telegram Moira found awaiting her on her return to the villa one evening. She read it and felt suddenly depressed and apprehensive. Why did he want to come? He would spoil everything. The bright evening went dead before her eyes; the happiness with which she had been brimming when she returned with Tonino from that marvellous drive among the Apennines was drained out of her. Her gloom retrospectively darkened the blue and golden beauty of the mountains, put out the bright flowers, dimmed the day's laughter and talk. 'Why does he want to come?' Miserably and resentfully, she wondered. 'And what 's going to happen? What 's going to happen?' She felt cold and rather breathless and almost sick with the questioning apprehension.

John's face, when he saw her standing there at the station, lit up instantaneously with all its hundred-candle-power tenderness and charm.

'My darling!' His voice was furry and tremulous. He leaned towards her; stiffening, Moira suffered herself to be kissed. His nails, she noticed disgustedly, were dirty.

The prospect of a meal alone with John had appalled her; she had asked Tonino to dinner. Besides, she wanted John to meet him. To have kept Tonino's existence a secret from John would have been to admit that there was something wrong in her relations with him. And there wasn't. She wanted John to meet him just like that, naturally, as a matter of course. Whether he 'd like Tonino when he 'd met him was another question. Moira had her doubts. They were justified by the event. John had begun by protesting when he heard that she had invited a guest. Their first evening—how could she? The voice trembled—fur in a breeze. She had to listen to outpourings of sentiment. But finally, when dinner-time arrived, he switched off the pathos and became once more the research student. Brightly inquiring, blankly intelligent, John cross-questioned his guest about all the interesting and important things that were happening in Italy. What was the real political situation? How did the new educational system work? What did people think of the reformed penal code? On all these matters Tonino was, of course, far less well informed than his interrogator. The Italy he knew was the Italy of his friends and his family, of shops and cafés and girls and the daily fight for money. All that historical, impersonal Italy, of which John so intelligently read in the high-class reviews, was utterly unknown to him. His answers to John's questions were childishly silly. Moira sat listening, dumb with misery.

'What *do* you find in that fellow?' her husband asked, when Tonino had taken his leave. 'He struck me as quite particularly uninteresting.'

Moira did not answer. There was a silence. John suddenly switched on his tenderly, protectively, yearningly marital smile. 'Time to go to bed, my sweetheart,' he said. Moira looked up at him and saw in his eyes that expression she knew so well and dreaded. 'My sweetheart,' he repeated, and the Landseer dog was also amorous. He put his arms round her and bent to kiss her face. Moira shuddered—but helplessly, dumbly, not knowing how to escape. He led her away.

When John had left her, she lay awake far into the night, remembering his ardours and his sentimentalities with a horror that the passage of time seemed actually to increase. Sleep came at last to deliver her.

Being an archaeologist, old Signor Bargioni was decidedly 'interesting.'

'But he bores me to death,' said Moira when, next day, her husband suggested that they should go and see him. 'That voice! And the way he goes on and on! And that beard! And his wife!'

John flushed with anger. 'Don't be childish,' he snapped out, forgetting how much he enjoyed her childishness when it didn't interfere with his amusements or his business. 'After all,' he insisted, 'there 's probably no man living who knows more about Tuscany in the Dark Ages.'

Nevertheless, in spite of darkest Tuscany, John had to pay his call without her. He spent a most improving hour, chatting about Romanesque architecture and the Lombard kings. But just before he left, the conversation somehow took another turn; casually, as though by chance, Tonino's name was mentioned. It was the signora who had insisted that it should be mentioned. Ignorance, her husband protested, is bliss. But Signora Bargioni loved scandal, and being middle-aged, ugly, envious, and malicious, was full of righteous indignation against the young wife and of hypocritical sympathy for the possibly injured husband. Poor Tarwin, she insisted—he ought to be warned. And so, tactfully, without seeming to say anything in particular, the old man dropped his hints.

Walking back to Bellosguardo, John was uneasily pensive. It was not that he imagined that Moira had been, or was likely to prove, unfaithful. Such things really didn't happen to oneself. Moira obviously liked the uninteresting young man; but, after all, and in spite of her childishness, Moira was a civilized human being. She had been too well brought up to do anything stupid. Besides, he reflected, remembering the previous evening, remembering all the years of their marriage, she had no temperament; she didn't know what passion was, she was utterly without sensuality. Her native childishness would reinforce her principles. Infants may be relied on to be pure; but not (and this was what troubled John Tarwin) worldly-wise. Moira wouldn't allow herself to be made love to; but she might easily let herself be swindled. Old Bargioni had been very discreet and non-committal; but it was obvious that he regarded this young fellow as an adventurer, out for what he could get. John frowned as he walked, and bit his lip.

He came home to find Moira and Tonino superintending the fitting of the new cretonne covers for the drawing-room chairs.

'Carefully, carefully,' Moira was saying to the upholsterer as he came in. She turned at the sound of his footsteps. A cloud seemed to obscure the brightness of her face when she saw him; but she made an effort to keep up her gaiety. 'Come and look, John,' she called. 'It's like getting a very fat old lady into a very tight dress. Too ridiculous!'

But John did not smile with her; his face was a mask of stony gravity. He stalked up to the chair, nodded curtly to Tonino, curtly to the upholsterer, and stood there watching the work as though he were a stranger, a hostile stranger at that. The sight of Moira and Tonino laughing and talking together had roused in him a sudden and violent fury. 'Disgusting little adventurer,' he said to himself ferociously behind his mask.

'It's a pretty stuff, don't you think?' said Moira. He only grunted.

'Very modern too,' added Tonino. 'The shops are very modern here,' he went on, speaking with all the rather touchy insistence on up-to-dateness which characterizes the inhabitants of an under-bathroomed and over-monumented country.

'Indeed?' said John sarcastically.

Moira frowned. 'You 've no idea how helpful Tonino has been,' she said with a certain warmth.

Effusively Tonino began to deny that she had any obligation towards him. John Tarwin interrupted him. 'Oh, I 've no doubt he was helpful,' he said in the same sarcastic tone and with a little smile of contempt.

There was an uncomfortable silence. Then Tonino took his leave. The moment he was gone, Moira turned on her husband. Her face was pale, her lips trembled. 'How dare you speak to one of my friends like that?' she asked in a voice unsteady with anger.

John flared up. 'Because I wanted to get rid of the fellow,' he answered; and the mask was off, his face was nakedly furious. 'It 's disgusting to see a man like that hanging round the house. An adventurer. Exploiting your silliness. Sponging on you.'

'Tonino doesn't sponge on me. And, anyhow, what do you know about it?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'One hears things.'

'Oh, it 's those old beasts, is it?' She hated the Bargionis, *hated* them. 'Instead of being grateful to Tonino for helping me! Which is more than you 've ever done, John. You, with your beastly tumours and your rotten old *Faust*!' The contempt in her voice was blasting. 'Just leaving me to sink or swim. And when somebody comes along and is just humanly decent to me, you insult him. And you fly into a rage of jealousy because I 'm normally grateful to him.'

John had had time to readjust his mask. 'I don't fly into any sort of rage,' he said, bottling his anger and speaking slowly and coldly. 'I just don't want you to be preyed upon by handsome, black-haired young pimps from the slums of Naples.'

'John!'

'Even if the preying *is* done platonically,' he went on. 'Which I 'm sure it is. But I don't want to have even a platonic pimp about.' He spoke coldly, slowly, with the deliberate intention of hurting her as much as he could. 'How much has he got out of you so far?'

Moira did not answer, but turned and hurried from the room.

Tonino had just got to the bottom of the hill, when a loud insistent hooting made him turn round. A big yellow car was close at his heels.

'Moira!' he called in astonishment. The car came to a halt beside him.

'Get in,' she commanded almost fiercely, as though she were angry with him. He did as he was told.

'But where did you think of going?' he asked.

'I don't know. Anywhere. Let 's take the Bologna road, into the mountains.'

'But you 've got no hat,' he objected, 'no coat.'

She only laughed and, throwing the car into gear, drove off at full speed. John spent his evening in solitude. He began by reproaching himself. 'I oughtn't to have spoken so brutally,' he thought, when he heard of Moira's precipitate departure. What tender, charming things he would say, when she came back, to make up for his hard words! And then, when she 'd made peace, he would talk to her gently, paternally, about the dangers of having bad friends. Even the anticipation of what he would say to her caused his face to light up with a beautiful smile. But when, three-quarters of an hour after dinner-time, he sat down to a lonely and overcooked meal, his mood had changed. 'If she wants to sulk,' he said to himself, 'why, let her sulk.' And as the hours passed, his heart grew harder. Midnight struck. His anger began to be tempered by a certain apprehension. Could anything have happened to her? He was anxious. But all the same he went to bed, on principle, firmly. Twenty minutes later he heard Moira's step on the stairs and then the closing of her door. She was back; nothing had happened; perversely, he felt all the more exasperated with her for being safe. Would she come and say good-night? He waited.

Absently, meanwhile, mechanically, Moira had undressed. She was thinking of all that had happened in the eternity since she had left the house. That marvellous sunset in the mountains! Every westward slope was rosily gilded; below them lay a gulf of blue shadow. They had stood in silence, gazing. 'Kiss me, Tonino,' she had suddenly whispered, and the touch of his lips had sent a kind of delicious apprehension fluttering under her skin. She pressed herself against him; his body was firm and solid within her clasp. She could feel the throb of his heart against her cheek, like something separately alive. Beat, beat, beat—and the throbbing life was not the life of the Tonino she knew, the Tonino who laughed and paid compliments and brought flowers; it was the life of some mysterious and separate power. A power with which the familiar individual Tonino happened to be connected, but almost irrelevantly. She shuddered a little. Mysterious and terrifying. But the terror was somehow attractive, like a dark precipice that allures. 'Kiss me, Tonino, kiss me.' The light faded; the hills died away into featureless flat shapes against the sky. 'I 'm cold,' she said at last, shivering. 'Let 's go.' They dined at a little inn, high up between the two passes. When they drove away, it was night. He put his arm round her and kissed her neck, at the nape, where the cropped hair was harsh against his mouth. 'You 'll make me drive into the ditch,' she laughed. But there was no laughter for Tonino. 'Moira, Moira,' he repeated; and there was something like agony in his voice. 'Moira.' And finally, at his suffering entreaty, she stopped the car. They got out. Under the chestnut trees, what utter darkness!

Moira slipped off her last garment and, naked before the mirror, looked at her image. It seemed the same as ever, her pale body; but in reality it was different, it was new, it had only just been born.

John still waited, but his wife did not come. 'All right, then,' he said to himself, with a spiteful little anger that disguised itself as a god-like and impersonal serenity of justice; 'let her sulk if she wants to. She only punishes herself.' He turned out the light and composed himself to sleep. Next morning he left for Rome and the Cytological Congress without saying good-bye; that would teach her. But 'thank goodness!' was Moira's first reflection when she heard that he had gone. And then, suddenly, she felt rather sorry for him. Poor John! Like a dead frog, galvanized; twitching, but never alive. He was pathetic really. She was so rich in happiness, that she could afford to be sorry for him. And in a way she was even grateful to him. If he hadn't come, if he hadn't behaved so unforgivably, nothing would have happened between Tonino and herself. Poor John! But all the same he was hopeless.

Day followed bright serene day. But Moira's life no longer flowed like the clear and shallow stream it had been before John's coming. It was turbulent now, there were depths and darknesses. And love was no longer a game with a pleasant companion; it was violent, all-absorbing, even rather terrible. Tonino became for her a kind of obsession. She was haunted by him—by his face, by his white teeth and his dark hair, by his hands and limbs and body. She wanted to be with him, to feel his nearness, to touch him. She would spend whole hours stroking his hair, ruffling it up, rearranging it fantastically, on end, like a golliwog's or with hanging fringes, or with the locks twisted up into horns. And when she had contrived some specially ludicrous effect, she clapped her hands and laughed, laughed, till the tears ran down her cheeks. 'If you could see yourself now!' she cried. Offended by her laughter, 'You play with me as though I were a doll,' Tonino would protest with a rather ludicrous expression of angry dignity. The laughter would go out of Moira's face and, with a seriousness that was fierce, almost cruel, she would lean forward and kiss him, silently, violently, again and again.

Absent, he was still unescapably with her, like a guilty conscience. Her solitudes were endless meditations on the theme of him. Sometimes the longing for his tangible presence was too achingly painful to be borne. Disobeying all his injunctions, breaking all her promises, she would telephone for him to come to her, she would drive off in search of him. Once, at about midnight, Tonino was called down from his room at the hotel by a message that a lady wanted to speak to him. He found her sitting in the car. 'But I couldn't help it, I simply couldn't help it,' she cried, to excuse herself and mollify his anger. Tonino refused to be propitiated. Coming like this in the middle of the night! It was madness, it was scandalous! She sat there, listening, pale and with trembling lips and the tears in her eyes. He was silent at last. 'But if you knew, Tonino,' she whispered, 'if you only knew——' She took his hand and kissed it, humbly.

Berto, when he heard the good news (for Tonino proudly told him at once), was curious to know whether the *signora forestiera* was as cold as Northern ladies were proverbially supposed to be. '*Macchè!*' Tonino protested vigorously. On the contrary. For a long time the two young sportsmen discussed the question of amorous temperatures, discussed it technically, professionally.

Tonino's raptures were not so extravagant as Moira's. So far as he was concerned, this sort of thing had happened before. Passion with Moira was not diminished by satisfaction, but rather, since the satisfaction was for her so novel, so intrinsically apocalyptic, increased. But that which caused her passion to increase produced in his a waning. He had got what he wanted; his night-begotten, touch-born longing for her (dulled in the interval and diminished by all the sporting love-hunts undertaken with Berto) had been fulfilled. She was no longer the desired and unobtainable, but the possessed, the known. By her surrender she had lowered herself to the level of all the other women he had ever made love to; she was just another item in the sportsman's grand total.

His attitude towards her underwent a change. Familiarity began to blunt his courtesy; his manner became offhandedly marital. When he saw her after an absence, '*Ebbene, tesoro,*' he would say in a genially unromantic tone, and pat her once or twice on the back or shoulder, as one might pat a horse. He permitted her to run her own errands and even his. Moira was happy to be his servant. Her love for him was, in one at least of its aspects, almost abject. She was dog-like in her devotion. Tonino found her adoration very agreeable so long as it expressed itself in fetching and carrying, in falling in with his suggestions, and in making him presents. 'But you mustn't, my darling, you shouldn't,' he protested each time she gave him something. Nevertheless, he accepted a pearl tie-pin, a pair of diamond and enamel links, a half-hunter on a gold and platinum chain. But Moira's devotion expressed itself also in other ways. Love demands as much as it gives. She wanted so much—his heart, his physical presence, his caresses, his confidences, his time, his fidelity. She was tyrannous in her adoring abjection. She pestered him with devotion. Tonino was bored and irritated by her excessive love. The omniscient Berto, to whom he carried his troubles, advised him to take a strong line. Women, he pronounced, must be kept in their places, firmly. They love one all the better if they are a little maltreated.

Tonino followed his advice and, pretexting work and social engagements, reduced the number of his visits. What a relief to be free of her importunity! Disquieted, Moira presented him with an amber cigar-holder. He protested, accepted it, but gave her no more of his company in return. A set of diamond studs produced no better effect. He talked vaguely and magniloquently about his career and the necessity for unremitting labour; that was his excuse for not coming more often to see her. It was on the tip of her tongue, one afternoon, to say that *she* would be his career, would give him anything he wanted, if only . . . But the memory of John's hateful words made her check herself. She was terrified lest he might make no difficulties about accepting her offer. 'Stay with me this evening,' she begged, throwing her arms round his neck. He suffered himself to be kissed.

'I wish I could stay,' he said hypocritically. 'But I have some important business this evening.' The important business was playing billiards with Berto.

Moira looked at him for a moment in silence; then, dropping her hands from his shoulders, turned away. She had seen in his eyes a weariness that was almost a horror.

Summer drew on; but in Moira's soul there was no inward brightness to match the sunshine. She passed her days in a misery that was alternately restless and apathetic. Her nerves began once more to lead their own irresponsible life apart from hers. For no sufficient cause and against her will, she would find herself uncontrollably in a fury, or crying, or laughing. When Tonino came to see her, she was almost always, in spite of all her resolutions, bitterly angry or hysterically tearful. 'But why do I behave like this?' she would ask herself despairingly. 'Why do I say such things? I 'm making him hate me.' But the next time he came, she would act in precisely the same way. It was as though she were possessed by a devil. And it was not her mind only that was sick. When she ran too quickly upstairs, her heart seemed to stop beating for a moment and there was a whirling darkness before her eyes. She had an almost daily headache, lost appetite, could not digest what she ate. In her thin sallow face her eyes became enormous. Looking into the glass, she found herself hideous, old, repulsive. 'No wonder he hates me,' she thought, and she would brood, brood for hours over the idea that she had become physically disgusting to him: disgusting to look at, to touch, tainting the air with her breath. The idea became an obsession, indescribably painful and humiliating.

'*Questa donna!*' Tonino would complain with a sigh, when he came back from seeing her. Why didn't he leave her, then? Berto was all for strong measures. Tonino protested that he hadn't the courage; the poor woman would be too unhappy. But he also enjoyed a good dinner and going for drives in an expensive car and receiving sumptuous additions to his wardrobe. He contented himself with complaining and being a Christian martyr. One evening his old friend Carlo Menardi introduced him to his sister. After that he bore his martyrdom with even less patience than before. Luisa Menardi was only seventeen, fresh, healthy, provocatively pretty, with rolling black eyes that said all sorts of things, and an impertinent tongue. Tonino's business appointments became more numerous than ever. Moira was left to brood in solitude on the dreadful theme of her own repulsiveness.

Then, quite suddenly, Tonino's manner towards her underwent another change. He became once more assiduously tender, thoughtful, affectionate. Instead of hardening himself with a shrug of indifference against her tears, instead of returning anger for hysterical anger, he was patient with her, was lovingly and cheerfully gentle. Gradually, by a kind of spiritual infection, she too became loving and gentle. Almost reluctantly—for the devil in her was the enemy of life and happiness—she came up again into the light.

'My dear son,' Vasari senior had written in his eloquent and disquieting letter, 'I am not one to complain feebly of Destiny; my whole life has been one long act of Faith and unshatterable Will. But there are blows under which even the strongest man must stagger—blows which . . .' The letter rumbled on for pages in the same style. The hard unpleasant fact that emerged from under the eloquence was that Tonino's father had been speculating on the Naples stock exchange, speculating unsuccessfully. On the first of the next month he would be required to pay out some fifty thousand francs more than he could lay his hands on. The Grand Hotel Ritz-Carlton was doomed; he might even have to sell the restaurant. Was there anything Tonino could do?

'Is it possible?' said Moira with a sigh of happiness. 'It seems too good to be true.' She leaned against him; Tonino kissed her eyes and spoke caressing words. There was no moon; the dark-blue sky was thickly constellated; and, like another starry universe gone deliriously mad, the fire-flies darted, alternately eclipsed and shining, among the olive trees. 'Darling,' he said aloud, and wondered if this would be a propitious moment to speak. '*Piccina mia.*' In the end he decided to postpone matters for another day or two. In another day or two, he calculated, she wouldn't be able to refuse him anything.

Tonino's calculations were correct. She let him have the money, not only without hesitation, but eagerly, joyfully. The reluctance was all on his side, in the receiving. He was almost in tears as he took the cheque, and the tears were tears of genuine emotion. 'You 're an angel,' he said, and his voice trembled. 'You 've saved us all.' Moira cried outright as she kissed him. How could John have said those things? She cried and was happy. A pair of silver-backed hair-brushes accompanied the cheque—just to show that the money had made no difference to their relationship. Tonino recognized the delicacy of her intention and was touched. 'You 're too good to me,' he insisted, 'too good.' He felt rather ashamed.

'Let 's go for a long drive to-morrow,' she suggested.

Tonino had arranged to go with Luisa and her brother to

Prato. But so strong was his emotion, that he was on the point of accepting Moira's invitation and sacrificing Luisa.

'All right,' he began, and then suddenly thought better of it. After all, he could go out with Moira any day. It was seldom that he had a chance of jaunting with Luisa. He struck his forehead, he made a despairing face. 'But what am I thinking of!' he cried. 'To-morrow 's the day we 're expecting the manager of the hotel company from Milan.'

'But must you be there to see him?'

'Alas!'

It was too sad. Just how sad Moira only fully realized the next day. She had never felt so lonely, never longed so ardently for his presence and affection. Unsatisfied, her longings were an unbearable restlessness. Hoping to escape from the loneliness and ennui with which she had filled the house, the garden, the landscape, she took out the car and drove away at random, not knowing whither. An hour later she found herself at Pistoia, and Pistoia was as hateful as every other place; she headed the car homewards. At Prato there was a fair. The road was crowded; the air was rich with a haze of dust and the noise of brazen music. In a field near the entrance to the town, the merry-go-rounds revolved with a glitter in the sunlight. A plunging horse held up the traffic. Moira stopped the car and looked about her at the crowd, at the swings, at the whirling roundabouts, looked with a cold hostility and distaste. Hateful! And suddenly there was Tonino sitting on a swan in the nearest merry-go-round, with a girl in pink muslin sitting in front of him between the white wings and the arching neck. Rising and falling as it went, the swan turned away out of sight. The music played on. *But poor poppa, poor poppa, he 's got nothin' at all.* The swan reappeared. The girl in pink was looking back over her shoulder, smiling. She was very young, vulgarly pretty, shining and plumped with health. Tonino's lips moved; behind the wall of noise what was he saying? All that Moira knew was that the girl laughed; her laughter was like an explosion of sensual young life. Tonino raised his hand and took hold of her bare brown arm. Like an undulating planet, the swan once more wheeled away out of sight. Meanwhile, the plunging horse had been quieted, the traffic had begun to move forward. Behind her a horn hooted insistently. But Moira did not stir. Something in her soul desired that the agony should be repeated and prolonged. Hoot, hoot, hoot! She paid no attention. Rising and falling, the swan emerged once more from eclipse.

This time Tonino saw her. Their eyes met; the laughter suddenly went out of his face. '*Porco madonna!*' shouted the infuriated motorist behind her, 'can't you move on?' Moira threw the car into gear and shot forward along the dusty road.

The cheque was in the post; there was still time, Tonino reflected, to stop the payment of it.

'You 're very silent,' said Luisa teasingly, as they drove back towards Florence. Her brother was sitting in front, at the wheel; he had no eyes at the back of his head. But Tonino sat beside her like a dummy. 'Why are you so silent?'

He looked at her, and his face was grave and stonily unresponsive to her bright and dimpling provocations. He sighed; then, making an effort, he smiled, rather wanly. Her hand was lying on her knee, palm upward, with a pathetic look of being unemployed. Dutifully doing what was expected of him Tonino reached out and took it.

At half-past six he was leaning his borrowed motor-cycle against the wall of Moira's villa. Feeling like a man who is about to undergo a dangerous operation, he rang the bell.

Moira was lying on her bed, had lain there ever since she came in; she was still wearing her dust-coat, she had not even taken off her shoes. Affecting an easy cheerfulness, as though nothing unusual had happened, Tonino entered almost jauntily.

'Lying down?' he said in a tone of surprised solicitude. 'You haven't got a headache, have you?' His words fell, trivial and ridiculous, into abysses of significant silence. With a sinking of the heart, he sat down on the edge of the bed, he laid a hand on her knee. Moira did not stir, but lay with averted face, remote and unmoving. 'What is it, my darling?' He patted her soothingly. 'You 're not upset because I went to Prato, are you?' he went on, in the incredulous voice of a man who is certain of a negative answer to his question. Still she said nothing. This silence was almost worse than the outcry he had anticipated. Desperately, knowing it was no good, he went on to talk about his old friend, Carlo Menardi, who had come round in his car to call for him; and as the director of the hotel company had left immediately after lunch—most unexpectedly—and as he 'd thought Moira was certain to be out, he had finally yielded and gone along with Carlo and his party. Of course, if he 'd realized that Moira hadn't gone out, he 'd have asked her to join them. For his own sake her company would have made all the difference.

His voice was sweet, ingratiating, apologetic. 'A black-haired pimp from the slums of Naples.' John's words reverberated in her memory. And so Tonino had never cared for her at all, only for her money. That other woman . . . She saw again that pink dress, lighter in tone than the sleek, sunburnt skin; Tonino's hand on the bare brown arm; that flash of eyes and laughing teeth. And meanwhile he was talking on and on, ingratiatingly; his very voice was a lie.

'Go away,' she said at last, without looking at him.

'But, my darling——' Bending over her, he tried to kiss her averted cheek. She turned and, with all her might, struck him in the face.

'You little devil!' he cried, made furious by the pain of the blow. He pulled out his handkerchief and held it to his bleeding lip. 'Very well, then.' His voice trembled with anger. 'If you want me to go, I'll go. With pleasure.' He walked heavily away. The door slammed behind him.

But perhaps, thought Moira, as she listened to the sound of his footsteps receding on the stairs, perhaps it hadn't really been so bad as it looked; perhaps she had misjudged him. She sat up; on the yellow counterpane was a little circular red stain—a drop of his blood. And it was she who had struck him.

'Tonino!' she called; but the house was silent. 'Tonino!' Still calling, she hurried downstairs, through the hall, out on to the porch. She was just in time to see him riding off through the gate on his motor-cycle. He was steering with one hand; the other still pressed a handkerchief to his mouth.

'Tonino, Tonino!' But either he didn't, or else he wouldn't hear her. The motor-cycle disappeared from view. And because he had gone, because he was angry, because of his bleeding lip, Moira was suddenly convinced that she had been accusing him falsely, that the wrong was all on her side. In a state of painful, uncontrollable agitation she ran to the garage. It was essential that she should catch him, speak to him, beg his pardon, implore him to come back. She started the car and drove out.

'One of these days,' John had warned her, 'you 'll go over the edge of the bank, if you 're not careful. It 's a horrible turning.'

Coming out of the garage door, she pulled the wheel hard over as usual. But too impatient to be with Tonino, she pressed the accelerator at the same time. John's prophecy was fulfilled. The car came too close to the edge of the bank; the dry earth crumbled and slid under its outer wheels. It tilted horribly, tottered for a long instant on the balancing point, and went over. But for the ilex tree, it would have gone crashing down the slope. As it was, the machine fell only a foot or so and came to rest, leaning drunkenly sideways with its flank against the bole of the tree. Shaken, but quite unhurt, Moira climbed over the edge of the car and dropped to the ground. 'Assunta! Giovanni!' The maids, the gardener, came running. When they saw what had happened, there was a small babel of exclamations, questions, comments.

'But can't you get it on to the drive again?' Moira insisted to the gardener; because it was necessary, absolutely necessary, that she should see Tonino at once.

Giovanni shook his head. It would take at least four men with levers and a pair of horses. . . .

'Telephone for a taxi, then,' she ordered Assunta and hurried into the house. If she remained any longer with those chattering people, she 'd begin to scream. Her nerves had come to separate life again; clenching her fists, she tried to fight them down.

Going up to her room, she sat down before the mirror and began, methodically and with deliberation (it was her will imposing itself on her nerves) to make up her face. She rubbed a little red on to her pale cheeks, painted her lips, dabbed on the powder. 'I must look presentable,' she thought, and put on her smartest hat. But would the taxi never come? She struggled with her impatience. 'My purse,' she said to herself. 'I shall need some money for the cab.' She was pleased with herself for being so full of foresight, so coolly practical in spite of her nerves. 'Yes, of course; my purse.'

But where was the purse? She remembered so clearly having thrown it on to the bed, when she came in from her drive. It was not there. She looked under the pillow, lifted the counterpane. Or perhaps it had fallen on the floor. She looked under the bed; the purse wasn't there. Was it possible that she hadn't put it on the bed at all? But it wasn't on her dressing-table, nor on the mantelpiece, nor on any of the shelves, nor in any of the drawers of her wardrobe. Where, where, where? And suddenly a terrible thought occurred to her. Tonino . . . Was it possible? The seconds passed. The possibility became a dreadful certainty. A thief as well as . . . John's words echoed in her head. 'Black-haired pimp from the slums of Naples, black-haired pimp from the slums . . .' And a thief as well. The bag was made of gold chain-work; there were more than four thousand lire in it. A thief, a thief . . . She stood quite still, strained, rigid, her eyes staring. Then something broke, something seemed to collapse within her. She cried aloud as though under a sudden intolerable pain.

The sound of the shot brought them running upstairs. They found her lying face downwards across the bed, still faintly breathing. But she was dead before the doctor could come up from the town. On a bed standing, as hers stood, in an alcove, it was difficult to lay out the body. When they moved it out of its recess, there was the sound of a hard, rather metallic fall. Assunta bent down to see what had dropped.

'It 's her purse,' she said. 'It must have got stuck between the bed and the wall.'

*From* BRIEF CANDLES

### *4th April* 1934

FIVE words sum up every biography. *Video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor.* Like all other human beings, I know what I ought to do, but continue to do what I know I oughtn't to do. This afternoon, for example, I went to see poor Beppo Bowles, miserably convalescent from 'flu. I knew I ought to have sat with him and let him pour out his complaints about youth's ingratitude and cruelty, his terror of advancing old age and loneliness, his awful suspicions that people are beginning to find him a bore, no longer *à la page*. The Bolinskys had given a party without inviting him, Hagworm hadn't asked him to a week-end since November. . . . I knew I ought to have listened sympathetically and proffered good advice, implored him not to make himself miserable over inevitabilities and trifles. The advice, no doubt, wouldn't have been accepted—as usual; but still, one never knows, therefore ought never to fail to give it. Instead of which I squared conscience in advance by buying him a pound of expensive grapes and told a lie about some committee I had to run off to, almost immediately. The truth being that I simply couldn't face a repetition of poor B.'s self-commiserations. I justified my behaviour, as well as by five bobs' worth of fruit, by righteous thoughts: at fifty, the man ought to know better than continue to attach importance to love affairs and invitations to dinner and meeting the right people. He oughtn't to be such an ass; therefore (impeccable logic) it wasn't incumbent upon me to do what I knew I should do. And so I hurried off after only a quarter of an hour with him—leaving the poor wretch to solitude and his festering self-pity. Shall go to him to-morrow for at least two hours.

'Besetting sin'—can one still use the term? No. It has too many unsatisfactory overtones and implications—blood of lamb, terrible thing to fall into hands of living God, hell fire, obsession with sex, offences, chastity instead of charity. (Note that poor old Beppo, turned inside out=Comstock or St. Paul.) Also besetting sin' has generally implied that incessant, egotistic brooding on self which mars so much piety. See in this context the diary of Prince, that zealous evangelical who subsequently founded the Abode of Love—under Guidance, as the Buchmanites would say; for his long-repressed wish for promiscuous copulation at last emerged into consciousness as a command from the Holy Ghost (with whom in the end he came to identify himself) to 'reconcile flesh with God.' And he proceeded to reconcile it—in public, apparently, and on the drawing-room sofa.

No, one can't use the phrase, nor think in the terms it implies. But that doesn't mean, of course, that persistent tendencies to behave badly don't exist, or that it isn't one's business to examine them, objectively, and try to do something about them. That remark of old Miller's, as we were riding to see one of his Indian patients in the mountains: 'Really and by nature every man's a unity; but you 've artificially transformed the unity into a trinity. One clever man and two idiots—that 's what you 've made yourself. An admirable manipulator of ideas, linked with a person who, so far as self-knowledge and feeling are concerned, is just a moron; and the pair of you associated with a half-witted body. A body that 's hopelessly unaware of all it does and feels, that has no accomplishments, that doesn't know how to use itself or anything else. Two imbeciles and one intellectual. But man is a democracy, where the majority rules. You 've got to do something about that majority.' This journal is a first step. Self-knowledge an essential preliminary to self-change. (Pure science and then applied.) That which besets me is indifference. I can't be bothered about people. Or rather, won't. For I avoid, carefully, all occasions for being bothered. A necessary part of the treatment is to embrace all the bothersome occasions one can, to go out of one's way to create them. Indifference is a form of sloth. For one can work hard, as I 've always done, and yet wallow in sloth; be industrious about one's job, but scandalously lazy about all that isn't the job. Because, of course, the job is fun. Whereas the non-job—personal relations, in my case—is disagreeable and laborious. More and more disagreeable as the habit of avoiding personal relations ingrains itself with the passage of time. Indifference is a form of sloth, and sloth in its turn is one of the symptoms of lovelessness. One isn't lazy about what one loves. The problem is: how to love? (Once more the word is suspect—greasy from being fingered by generations of Stigginses. There ought to be some way of dry-cleaning and disinfecting words. Love, purity, goodness, spirit—a pile of dirty linen waiting for the laundress.)

How, then, to—not 'love,' since it 's an unwashed handkerchief—feel, say, persistent affectionate interest in people? How make the anthropological approach to them, as old Miller would say? Not easy to answer.

*5th April* 1934

Worked all morning. For it would be silly not to put my materials into shape. Into a new shape, of course. My original conception was of a vast *Bouvard et Pécuchet,* constructed of historical facts. A picture of futility, apparently objective, scientific, but composed, I realize, in order to justify my own way of life. If men had always behaved either like half-wits or baboons, if they couldn't behave otherwise, then I was justified in sitting comfortably in the stalls with my opera-glasses. Whereas if there were something to be done, if the behaviour could be modified . . . Meanwhile a description of the behaviour and an account of the ways of modifying it will be valuable. Though not so valuable as to justify complete abstention from all other forms of activity.

In the afternoon to Miller's, where I found a parson, who takes Christianity seriously and has started an organization of pacifists. Purchas by name. Middle-aged. Slightly the muscular-jocular Christian manner. (How hard to admit that a man can use clichés and yet be intelligent!) But a very decent sort of man. More than decent, indeed. Rather impressive.

The aim is to use and extend Purchas's organization. The unit a small group, like the Early Christian *agape,* or the communist cell. (Note that all successful movements have been built up in rowing eights or football elevens.) Purchas's groups preface meetings with Christian devotions. Empirically, it is found that a devotional atmosphere increases efficiency, intensifies spirit of co-operation and self-sacrifice. But devotion in Christian terms will be largely unacceptable. Miller believes possible a non-theological praxis of meditation. Which he would like, of course, to couple with training, along F. M. Alexander's lines, in use of the self, beginning with physical control and achieving through it (since mind and body are one) control of impulses and feelings. But this is impracticable. The necessary teachers don't exist. 'We must be content to do what we can from the mental side. The physical will let us down, of course. The flesh is weak in so many more ways than we suppose.'

I agreed to contribute money, prepare some literature, and go round speaking to groups. The last is the most difficult, as I have always refused to utter in public. When Purchas had gone, asked Miller if I should take lessons in speaking.

Answer. 'If you take lessons before you 're well and physically co-ordinated, you 'll merely be learning yet another way of using yourself badly. Get well, achieve co-ordination, use yourself properly; you 'll be able to speak in any way you please. The difficulties, from stage fright to voice production, will no longer exist.'

Miller then gave me a lesson in use of the self. Learning to sit in a chair, to get out of it, to lean back and forward. He warned me it might seem a bit pointless at first. But that interest and understanding would grow with achievement. And that I should find it the solution of the *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor* problem: a technique for translating good intentions into acts, for being sure of doing what one knows one ought to do.

Spent the evening with Beppo. After listening to catalogues of miseries, suggested that there was no cure, only prevention. Avoid the cause. His reaction was passionate anger: I was robbing life of its point, condemning him to suicide. In answer I hinted that there was more than one point. He said he would rather die than give up his point; then changed his mood and wished to God he could give it up. But for what? I suggested pacifism. But he was a pacifist already, always been. Yes, I knew that; but a passive pacifist, a negative one. There was such a thing as active and positive pacifism. He listened, said he 'd think about it, thought perhaps it might be a way out.

### *8th April* 1934

Conditioned reflex. What a lot of satisfaction I got out of old Pavlov when first I read him. The ultimate de-bunking of all human pretensions. We were all dogs and bitches together. Bow-wow, sniff the lamp-post, lift a leg, bury the bone. No nonsense about free will, goodness, truth, and all the rest. Each age has its psychological revolutionaries. La Mettrie, Hume, Condillac, and finally the Marquis de Sade, latest and most sweeping of the eighteenth-century de-bunkers. Perhaps, indeed, the ultimate and absolute revolutionary. But few have the courage to follow the revolutionary argument to Sade's conclusions. Meanwhile, science did not stand still. *Dix-*

*huitième* de-bunking, apart from Sade, proved inadequate. The nineteenth century had to begin again. Marx and the Darwinians. Who are still with us—Marx obsessively so. Meanwhile the twentieth century has produced yet another lot of de-bunkers—Freud and, when he began to flag, Pavlov and the Behaviourists. Conditioned reflex: it seemed, I remember, to put the lid on everything. Whereas actually, of course, it merely re-stated the doctrine of free will. For if reflexes can be conditioned, then, obviously, they can be re-conditioned. Learning to use the self properly, when one has been using it badly—what is it but re-conditioning one's reflexes?

Lunched with my father. More cheerful than I 've seen him recently, but old and, oddly, rather enjoying it. Making much of getting out of his chair with difficulty, of climbing very slowly up the stairs. A way, I suppose, of increasing his sense of importance. Perhaps also a way of commanding sympathy whenever he happens to want it. Baby cries so that mother shall come and make a fuss of him. It goes on from the cradle to the grave. Miller says of old age that it 's largely a bad habit. Use conditions function. Walk about as if you were a martyr to rheumatism and you 'll impose such violent muscular strains upon yourself that a martyr to rheumatism you 'll really be. Behave like an old man and your body will function like an old man's, you 'll think and feel as an old man. The lean and slippered pantaloon—literally a part that one plays. If you refuse to play it and learn how to act on your refusal, you won't become a pantaloon. I suspect this is largely true. Anyhow, my father is playing his present part with gusto. One of the great advantages of being old, provided that one's economic position is reasonably secure and one's health not too bad, is that one can afford to be serene. The grave is near, one has made a habit of not feeling anything very strongly; it 's easy, therefore, to take the God's-eye view of things. My father took it about peace, for example. Yes, men were mad, he agreed; there would be another war quite soon—about 1940, he thought. (A date, significantly, when he was practically certain to be dead!) Much worse than the last war, yes; and would probably destroy the civilization of Western Europe. But did it really matter so much? Civilization would go on in other continents, would build itself up anew in the devastated areas. Our time scale was all wrong. We should think of ourselves, not as living in the thirties of the twentieth century, but as at a point between two ice ages. And he ended up by quoting Goethe—*alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichniss.* All which is doubtless quite true, but not the whole truth. Query: how to combine belief that the world is to a great extent illusory with belief that it is none the less essential to improve the illusion? How to be simultaneously dispassionate and not indifferent, serene like an old man and active like a young one?

### *20th May* 1934

Made my second speech yesterday night. Without serious nervousness. It 's easy enough, once you 've made up your mind that it doesn't matter if you make a fool of yourself. But it 's depressing. There 's a sense in which five hundred people in a hall aren't concrete. One 's talking to a collective noun, an abstraction, not to a set of individuals. Only those already partially or completely convinced of what you 're saying even want to understand you. The rest are invincibly ignorant. In private conversation, you could be certain of getting your man to make at least a grudging effort to understand you. The fact that there 's an audience confirms the not-understander in his incomprehension. Particularly if he can ask questions after the address. Some of the reasons for this are obvious. Just getting up and being looked at is a pleasure—in many cases, piercing to the point of pain. Excruciating organisms of self-assertion. Pleasure is heightened if the question is hostile. Hostility is a declaration of personal independence. Makes it clear at the same time that it 's only an accident that the questioner isn't on the platform himself—accident or else, of course, deliberate plot on the part of ruffians who want to keep him down. Interruptions and questions are generally of course quite irrelevant. Hecklers (like the rest of us) live in their own private world, make no effort to enter other people's worlds. Most arguments in public are at cross-purposes and in different languages—without interpreters.

Mark was at the meeting, and afterwards, in my rooms, took pleasure in intensifying my depression.

'Might as well go and talk to cows in a field.' The temptation to agree with him was strong. All my old habits of thinking, living, feeling, impel me towards agreement. A senseless world, where nothing whatever can be done—how satisfactory! One can go off and (seeing that there 's nothing else to do) compile one's treatise on sociology—the science of human senselessness. With Mark last night I caught myself taking intense pleasure in commenting on the imbecility of my audience and human beings at large. Caught and checked myself. Reflecting that seeds had been sown, that if only one were to germinate, it would have been worth while to hold the meeting. Worth while even if none were to germinate—for my own sake, as an exercise, a training for doing better next time.

I didn't say all this. Merely stopped talking and, I suppose, changed my expression. Mark, who notices everything, began to laugh. Foresaw the time when I 'd preface every mention of a person or group with the adjective 'dear.' 'The dear Communists,' 'the dear armament makers,' 'dear General Goering.'

I laughed—for he was comic in his best savage manner. But, after all, if you had enough love and goodness, you could be sure of evoking some measure of answering love and goodness from almost every one you came in contact with—whoever he or she might be. And in that case almost every one would really be 'dear.' At present, most people seem more or less imbecile or odious; the fault is at least as much in oneself as in them.

### *24th May* 1934

Put in four hours this morning at working up my notes. Extraordinary pleasure! How easily one could slip back into uninterrupted scholarship and idea-mongering! Into that 'higher Life' which is simply death without tears. Peace, irresponsibility—all the delights of death here and now. In the past, you had to go into a monastery to find them. You paid for the pleasures of death with obedience, poverty, chastity. Now you can have them gratis and in the ordinary world. Death completely without tears. Death with smiles, death with the pleasures of bed and bottle, death in private with nobody to bully you. Scholars, philosophers, men of science—conventionally supposed to be unpractical. But what other class of men has succeeded in getting the world to accept it and (more astonishing) go on accepting it at its own valuation? Kings have lost their divine right, plutocrats look as though they were going to lose theirs. But Higher Lifers continue to be labelled as superior. It 's the fruit of persistence. Persistently paying compliments to themselves, persistently disparaging other people. Year in, year out, for the last sixty centuries. We 're High, you 're Low; we 're of the Spirit, you 're of the World. Again and again, like Pears' Soap. It 's been accepted, now, as an axiom. But, in fact, the Higher Life is merely the better death-substitute. A more complete escape from the responsibilities of living than alcohol or morphia or addiction to sex or property. Booze and dope destroy health. Sooner or later sex addicts get involved in responsibilities. Property addicts can never get all the stamps, Chinese vases, houses, varieties of lilies, or whatever it may be, that they want. Their escape is a torment of Tantalus. Whereas the Higher Life escapes into a world where there 's no risk to health and the minimum of responsibilities and tortures. A world, what 's more, that tradition regards as actually superior to the world of responsible living—higher. The Higher Shirker can fairly wallow in his good conscience. For how easy to find in the life of scholarship and research equivalents for all the moral virtues! Some, of course, are not equivalent, but identical: perseverance, patience, self-forgetfulness, and the like. Good means to ends that may be bad. You can work hard and whole-heartedly at anything—from atomic physics to forgery and white-slaving. The rest are ethical virtues transposed into the mental key. *Chastity* of artistic and mathematical form. *Purity* of scientific research. *Courageousness* of thought. *Bold* hypotheses. Logical *integrity*. *Temperance* of views. Intellectual *humility* before the facts. All the cardinal virtues in fancy dress. The Higher Lifers come to think of themselves as saints—saints of art and science and scholarship. A purely figurative and metaphorical sanctity taken *au pied de la lettre.*

'Blessed are the poor in spirit.' The Higher Lifer even has equivalents for spiritual poverty. As a man of science, he tries to keep himself unbiased by his interests and prejudices. But that 's not all. Ethical poverty of spirit entails taking no thought for the morrow, letting the dead bury their dead, losing one's life to gain it. The Higher Lifer can make parodies of these renunciations. I know; for I made them and actually took credit to myself for having made them. You live continuously and responsibly only in the other, Higher world. In this, you detach yourself from your past; you refuse to commit yourself in the future; you have no convictions, but live moment by moment; you renounce your own identity, except as a Higher Lifer, and become just the succession of your states. A more than Franciscan destitution. Which can be combined, however, with more than Napoleonic exultations in imperialism. I used to think I had no will to power. Now I perceive that I vented it on thoughts, rather than people. Conquering an unknown province of knowledge. Getting the better of a problem. Forcing ideas to associate or come apart. Bullying recalcitrant words to assume a certain pattern. All the fun of being a dictator without any risks and responsibilities.

### *26th May* 1934

Literature for peace—of what kind? One can concentrate on economics: trade barriers, disorganized currency, impediments in the way of migration, private interests bent on making profits at all costs. And so on. One can concentrate on politics: danger of the concept of the sovereign state, as a wholly immoral being having interests irreconcilable with those of other sovereign states. One can propose political and economic remedies—trade agreements, international arbitration, collective security. Sensible prescriptions following sound diagnosis. But has the diagnosis gone far enough, and will the patient follow the treatment prescribed?

This question came up in the course of to-day's discussion with Miller. Answer in the negative. The patient can't follow the treatment prescribed, for a good reason: there is no patient. States and Nations don't exist as such. There are only people. Sets of people living in certain areas, having certain allegiances. Nations won't change their national policies unless and until people change their private policies. All governments, even Hitler's, even Stalin's, even Mussolini's, are representative. To-day's national behaviour—a large-scale projection of to-day's individual behaviour. Or rather, to be more accurate, a large-scale projection of the individual's secret wishes and intentions. For we should all like to behave a good deal worse than our conscience and respect for public opinion allow. One of the great attractions of patriotism—it fulfils our worst wishes. In the person of our nation we are able, vicariously, to bully and cheat. Bully and cheat, what 's more, with a feeling that we 're profoundly virtuous. Sweet and decorous to murder, lie, torture for the sake of the fatherland. Good international policies are projections of individual good intentions and benevolent wishes, and must be of the same kind as good inter-personal policies. Pacifist propaganda must be aimed at people as well as their governments; must start simultaneously at the periphery and the centre.

Empirical facts:

One. We are all capable of love for other human beings.

Two. We impose limitations on that love.

Three. We can transcend all these limitations—*if we choose to*. (It is a matter of observation that any one who so desires can overcome personal dislike, class feeling, national hatred, colour prejudice. Not easy; but it can be done, if we have the will and know how to carry out our good intentions.)

Four. Love expressing itself in good treatment breeds love. Hate expressing itself in bad treatment breeds hate.

In the light of these facts, it 's obvious what inter-personal, inter-class, and international policies should be. But, again, knowledge cuts little ice. We all know; we almost all fail to do. It is a question, as usual, of the best methods of implementing intentions. Among other things, peace propaganda must be a set of instructions in the art of modifying character.

> I see
> The lost are like this, and their scourge to be,
> As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

Hell is the incapacity to be other than the creature one finds oneself ordinarily behaving as.

On the way home from Miller's, dived into the public lavatory at Marble Arch, and there ran into Beppo Bowles deep in conversation with one of those flannel-trousered, hatless young men who look like undergraduates and are, I suppose, very junior clerks or shop assistants. On B.'s face, what a mingling of elation and anxiety. Happy, drunk with thrilling anticipation, and at the same time horribly anxious and afraid. He might be turned down—unspeakable humiliation! He might not be turned down—appalling dangers! Frustration of desire, if there was failure, cruel blow to pride, wound to the very root of personality. And, if success, fear (through all the triumph) of blackmail and police court. Poor wretch! He was horribly embarrassed at the sight of me. I just nodded and hurried past. B.'s hell—an underground lavatory with rows of urinals stretching to infinity in all directions and a boy at each. Beppo walking up and down the rows, for ever—his sweating self, but

### *1st June* 1934

To-night, at dinner with Mark, saw Helen, for the first time since my return from America.

Consider the meaning of a face. A face can be a symbol, signifying matter which would require volumes for its exposition in successive detail. A vast sum, for the person on whom it acts as a symbol, of feelings and thoughts, of remembered sensations, impressions, judgments, experiences — all rendered synthetically and simultaneously, at a single glance. As she came into the restaurant, it was like the drowning man's instantaneous vision of life. A futile, bad, unsatisfactory life; and a vision, charged with regret. All those wrong choices, those opportunities irrevocably missed! And that sad face was not only a symbol, indirectly expressive of *my* history; it was also a directly expressive emblem of hers. A history for whose saddening and embittering quality I was at least in part responsible. If I had accepted the love she wanted to give me, if I had consented to love (for I *could* have loved) in return . . . But I preferred to be *free*, for the sake of my *work*—in other words, to remain enslaved in a world where there could be no question of freedom, for the sake of my amusements. I insisted on irresponsible sensuality, rather than love. Insisted, in other words, on her becoming a means to the end of my detached, physical satisfaction and, conversely, of course, on my becoming a means to hers.

Curious how irrelevant appears the fact of having been, technically, 'lovers'! It doesn't qualify her indifference or my feeling. There 's a maxim of La Rochefoucauld's about women forgetting the favours they have accorded to past lovers. I used to like it for being cynical; but really it 's just a bald statement of the fact that something that 's meant to be irrelevant, i.e. sensuality, *is* irrelevant. Into my present complex of thoughts, feelings, and memories, physical desire, I find, enters hardly at all. In spite of the fact that my memories are of intense and complete satisfactions. Surprising, the extent to which eroticism is a matter of choice and focus. I don't think much in erotic terms now; but very easily could, if I wished to. Choose to consider individuals in their capacity as potential givers and receivers of pleasure, focus attention on sensual satisfactions: eroticism will become immensely important and great quantities of energy will be directed along erotic channels. Choose a different conception of the individual, another focal range: energy will flow elsewhere and eroticism seem relatively unimportant.

Spent a good part of the evening arguing about peace and social justice. Mark, as sarcastically disagreeable as he knew how to be about Miller and what he called my neo-Jesus avatar.

'If the swine want to rip one another's guts out, let them; anyhow, you can't prevent them. Swine will be swine.' But may become human, I insisted. *Homo non nascitur, fit.* Or rather makes himself out of the ready-made elements and potentialities of man with which he 's born.

Helen's was the usual communist argument—no peace or social justice without a preliminary 'liquidation' of capitalists, liberals, and so forth. As though you could use violent, unjust means and achieve peace and justice! Means determine ends; and must be like the ends proposed. Means intrinsically different from the ends proposed achieve ends like themselves, not like those they were meant to achieve. Violence and war will produce a peace and a social organization having the potentialities of more violence and war. The war to end war resulted, as usual, in a peace essentially like war; the revolution to achieve communism, in a hierarchical state where a minority rules by police methods *à la* Metternich-Hitler-Mussolini, and where the power to oppress in virtue of being rich is replaced by the power to oppress in virtue of being a member of the oligarchy. Peace and social justice, only obtainable by means that are just and pacific. And people will behave justly and pacifically only if they have trained themselves as individuals to do so, even in circumstances where it would be easier to behave violently and unjustly. And the training must be simultaneously physical and mental. Knowledge of how to use the self and of what the self should be used for. Neo-Ignatius and neo-Sandow was Mark's verdict.

Put Mark into a cab and walked, as the night was beautiful, all the way from Soho to Chelsea. Theatres were closing. Helen brightened suddenly to a mood of malevolent high spirits. Commenting in a ringing voice on passers-by. As though we were at the Zoo. Embarrassing, but funny and acute, as when she pointed to the rich young men in top-hats trying to look like the De Reszke Aristocrat, or opening and shutting cigarette-cases in the style of Gerald du Maurier; to the women trying to look like Vogue, or expensive advertisements (for winter cruises or fur coats), head in air, eyelids dropped superciliously—or slouching like screen vamps, with their stomachs stuck out, as though expecting twins. The pitiable models on which people form themselves! Once it was the Imitation of Christ—now of Hollywood.

Were silent when we had left the crowds. Then Helen asked if I were happy. I said, yes—though didn't know if happiness was the right word. More substantial, more complete, more interested, more aware. If not happy exactly, at any rate having greater potentialities for happiness. Another silence. Then: 'I thought I could never see you again, because of that dog. Then Ekki came, and the dog was quite irrelevant. And now he 's gone, it 's still irrelevant. For another reason. Everything 's irrelevant, for that matter. Except Communism.' But that was an afterthought—an expression of piety, uttered by force of habit. I said our ends were the same, the means adopted, different. For her, end justified means; for me, means the end. Perhaps, I said, one day she would see the importance of the means.

### *3rd June* 1934

At to-day's lesson with Miller found myself suddenly a step forward in my grasp of the theory and practice of the technique. To learn proper use one must first inhibit all improper uses of the self. Refuse to be hurried into gaining ends by the equivalent (in personal, psycho-physiological terms) of violent revolution; inhibit this tendency, concentrate on the means whereby the end is to be achieved; then act. This process entails knowing good and bad use—knowing them apart. By the 'feel.' Increased awareness and increased power of control result. Awareness and control: trivialities take on new significance. Indeed, nothing is trivial any more or negligible. Cleaning teeth, putting on shoes—such processes are reduced by habits of bad use to a kind of tiresome non-existence. Become conscious, inhibit, cease to be a greedy end-gainer, concentrate on means: tiresome non-existence turns into absorbingly interesting reality. In Evans-Wentz's last book on Tibet I find among 'The Precepts of the Gurus' the injunction: 'Constantly retain alertness of consciousness in walking, in sitting, in eating, in sleeping.' An injunction, like most injunctions, unaccompanied by instructions as to the right way of carrying it out. Here, practical instructions accompany injunctions; one is taught how to become aware. And not only that. Also how to perform rightly, instead of wrongly, the activities of which there is awareness. Nor is this all. Awareness and power of control are transferable. Skill acquired in getting to know the muscular aspect of mind-body can be carried over into the exploration of other aspects. There is increasing ability to detect one's motives for any given piece of behaviour, to assess correctly the quality of a feeling, the real significance of a thought. Also, one becomes more clearly and consistently conscious of what 's going on in the outside world, and the judgment associated with that heightened consciousness is improved. Control also is transferred. Acquire the art of inhibiting muscular bad use and you acquire thereby the art of inhibiting more complicated trains of behaviour. Not only this: there is prevention as well as cure. Given proper correlation, many occasions for behaving undesirably just don't arise. There is an end, for example, of neurotic anxieties and depressions—whatever the previous history. For note: most infantile and adolescent histories are disastrous: yet only some individuals develop serious neurosis. Those, precisely, in whom use of the self is particularly bad. They succumb because resistance is poor. In practice, neurosis is always associated with some kind of wrong use. (Note the typically bad physical posture of neurotics and lunatics. The stooping back, the muscular tension, the sunken head.) Re-educate. Give back correct physical use. You remove a keystone of the arch constituting the neurotic personality. The neurotic personality collapses. And in its place is built up a personality in which all the habits of physical use are correct. But correct physical use entails—since body-mind is indivisible except in thought—correct mental use. Most of us are slightly neurotic. Even slight neurosis provides endless occasions for bad behaviour. Teaching of right use gets rid of neurosis—therefore of many occasions for bad behaviour. Hitherto preventive ethics has been thought of as external to individuals. Social and economic reforms carried out with a view to eliminating occasions for bad behaviour. This is important. But not nearly enough. Belief that it is enough makes the social-reform conception of progress nonsensical. The knowledge that it is nonsensical has always given me pleasure. Sticking pins in large, highly inflated balloons—one of the most delightful of amusements. But a bit childish; and after a time it palls. So how satisfactory to find that there seems to be a way of making sense of the nonsense. A method of achieving progress from within as well as from without. Progress, not only as a citizen, a machine-minder, and machine-user, but also as a human being.

Prevention is good; but can't eliminate the necessity for cure. The power to cure bad behaviour seems essentially similar to the power to cure bad co-ordination. One learns this last when learning the proper use of self. There is a transference. The power to inhibit and control. It becomes easier to inhibit undesirable impulses. Easier to follow as well as see and approve the better. Easier to put good intentions into practice and be patient, good-tempered, kind, unrapacious, chaste.

### *25th June* 1934

The facility with which one could become a Stiggins in modern dress! A much subtler, and therefore more detestable, more dangerous Stiggins. For of course Stiggins himself was too stupid to be either intrinsically very bad or capable of doing much harm to other people. Whereas if I set my mind to it, Heaven knows what I mightn't achieve in the way of lies in the soul. Even with *not* setting my mind to it, I could go far—as I perceived, to my horror, to-day, when I found myself talking to Purchas and three or four of his young people. Talking about Miller's 'anthropological approach'; talking about peace as a way of life as well as an international policy—the way of life being the condition of any policy that had the least hope of being permanently successful. Talking so clearly, so profoundly, so convincingly. (The poor devils were listening with their tongues hanging out.) Much more convincingly than Purchas himself could have done; that muscular-jocular-Christian style starts by being effective, but soon makes hearers feel that they're being talked down to. What they like is that the speaker should be thoroughly serious, but comprehensible. Which is a trick I happen to possess. There I was, discoursing in a really masterly way about the spiritual life, and taking intense pleasure in that mastery, secretly congratulating myself on being not only so clever, but also so good—when all at once I realized who I was: Stiggins. Talking about the theory of courage, self-sacrifice, patience, without any knowledge of the practice. Talking, moreover, in the presence of people who *have* practised what I was preaching—preaching so effectively that the proper roles were reversed: they were listening to me, not I to them. The discovery of what I was doing came suddenly. I was overcome with shame. And yet—more shameful—went on talking. Not for long, however. A minute or two, and I simply had to stop, apologize, insist that it wasn't my business to talk.

This shows how easy it is to be Stiggins by mistake and unconsciously. But also that unconsciousness is no excuse, and that one's responsible for the mistake, which arises, of course, from the pleasure one takes in being more talented than other people and in dominating them by means of those talents. Why is one unconscious? Because one hasn't ever taken the trouble to examine one's motives; and one doesn't examine one's motives, because one's motives are mostly discreditable. Alternatively, of course, one examines one's motives, but tells oneself lies about them till one comes to believe that they 're good. Which is the conviction of the self-conscious Stiggins. I 've always condemned showing off and the desire to dominate as vulgar, and imagined myself pretty free of these vulgarities. But in so far as free at all, free, I now perceive, only thanks to the indifference which has kept me away from other people, thanks to the external-economic and internal-intellectual circumstances which made me a sociologist rather than a banker, administrator, engineer, working in direct contact with my fellows. Not to make contacts, I have realized, is wrong; but the moment I make them, I catch myself showing off and trying to dominate. Showing off, to make it worse, as Stiggins would have done, trying to dominate by a purely verbal display of virtues which I don't put into practice. Humiliating to find that one's supposed good qualities are mainly due to circumstances and the bad habit of indifference, which made me shirk occasions for behaving badly—or well, for that matter, seeing that it 's very difficult to behave either well or badly except towards other people. More humiliating still to find that when, with an effort of goodwill one creates the necessary opportunities, one immediately responds to them by behaving badly. Note: meditate on the virtues that are the contraries of vanity, lust for power, hypocrisy.

### *29th July* 1934

With Helen to-day to hear Miller speaking at Tower Hill, during the dinner-hour. A big crowd. He spoke well—the right mixture of arguments, jokes, emotional appeal. The theme, peace. Peace everywhere or no peace at all. International peace not achievable unless a translation into policy of inter-individual relations. Militarists at home, in factory, and office, towards inferiors and rivals, cannot logically expect governments which represent them to behave as pacifists. Hypocrisy and stupidity of those who advocate peace between states, while conducting private wars in business or the family. Meanwhile, there was much heckling by communists in the crowd. How can anything be achieved without revolution? Without liquidating the individuals and classes standing in the way of social progress? And so on. Answer (always with extraordinary good humour and wit): means determine ends. Violence and coercion produce a post-revolutionary society, not communistic, but (like the Russian) hierarchical, ruled by an oligarchy using secret police methods. And all the rest.

After about a quarter of an hour, an angry young heckler climbed on to the little wall, where Miller was standing, and threatened to knock him off if he didn't stop. 'Come on, then, Archibald.' The crowd laughed; the young man grew still angrier, advanced, clenched, squared up. 'Get down, you old bastard, or else——' Miller stood quite still, smiling, hands by side, saying, All right; he had no objection to being knocked off. The attacker made sparring movements, brought a fist within an inch of Miller's nose. The old man didn't budge, showed no sign of fear or anger. The other drew back the hand, but instead of bringing it into Miller's face, hit him on the chest. Pretty hard. Miller staggered, lost his balance, and fell off the wall into the crowd. Apologized to the people he'd fallen on, laughed, got up again on to the wall. Repetition of the performance. Again the young man threatened the face, but again, when Miller didn't lift his hands, or show either fear or anger, hit him on the chest. Miller went down and again climbed up. Got another blow. Came up once more. This time the man screwed himself up to hitting the face, but only with the flat of his hand. Miller straightened his head and went on smiling. 'Three shots a penny, Archibald.' The man let out at the body and knocked him off the wall. Up again. Miller looked at his watch. 'Another ten minutes before you need go back to work, Archibald. Come on.' But this time the man could only bring himself to shake his fist and call Miller a blood-sucking old reactionary. Then turned and walked off along the wall, pursued by derisive laughter, jokes, and whistlings from the crowd. Miller went on with his speech.

Helen's reaction was curious. Distress at the spectacle of the young man's brutality towards the old. But at the same time anger with Miller for allowing himself to be knocked about without resistance. The reason for this anger? Obscure; but I think she resented Miller's success. Resented the fact that the young man had been reduced, psychologically, to impotence. Resented the demonstration that there was an alternative to terrorism and a non-violent means of combating it. 'It's only a trick,' she said. Not a very easy trick, I insisted; and that I certainly couldn't perform it. 'Any one could learn it, if he tried.' 'Possibly; wouldn't it be a good thing if we all tried?' 'No, I think it 's stupid.' Why? She found it hard to answer. 'Because it 's unnatural,' was the reason she managed to formulate at last—and proceeded to develop it in terms of a kind of egalitarian philosophy. 'I want to be like other people. To have the same feelings and interests. I don't want to make myself different. Just an ordinary person; not somebody who 's proud of having learnt a difficult trick. Like that old Miller of yours.' I pointed out that we 'd all learn such difficult tricks as driving cars, working in offices, reading and writing, crossing the street. Why shouldn't we all learn this other difficult trick? A trick, potentially, so much more useful. If all were to learn it, then one could afford to be like other people, one could share all their feelings in safety, with the certainty that one would be sharing something good, not bad. But Helen wasn't to be persuaded. And when I suggested that we should join the old man for a late lunch, she refused. Said she didn't want to know him. That the young man had been quite right; Miller was a reactionary. Disguising himself in a shroud of talk about economic justice; but underneath just a tory agent. His insistence that changes in social organization weren't enough, but that they must be accompanied by, must spring from a change in personal relations—what was that but a plea for conservatism? 'I think he 's pernicious,' she said. 'And I think you 're pernicious.' But she consented to have lunch with me. Which showed how little stock she set on my powers to shake her convictions! Arguments—I might have lots of good arguments; to those she was impervious. But Miller's action had got between the joints of her armour. He acted his doctrine, didn't rest content with talking it. Her confidence that I couldn't get between the joints, as he had done, was extremely insulting. The more so as I knew it was justified.

Perseverance, courage, endurance. All, fruits of love. Love goodness enough, and indifference and slackness are inconceivable. Courage comes as to the mother defending her child; and at the same time there is no fear of the opponent, who is loved, whatever he may do, because of the potentialities for goodness in him. As for pain, fatigue, disapproval—they are borne cheerfully, because they seem of no consequence by comparison with the goodness loved and pursued. Enormous gulf separating me from this state! The fact that Helen was not afraid of my perniciousness (as being only theoretical), while dreading Miller's (because his life was the same as his argument), was a painful reminder of the existence of this gulf.

### *4th August*

Returned depressed from an evening with Helen and half a dozen of her young political friends. Such a passion for 'liquidating' the people who don't agree with them! And such a sincere conviction that liquidation is necessary!

Revolting—but only to be expected. Regard the problem of reform exclusively as a matter of politics and economics, and you *must* approve and practise liquidation.

Consider recent history. Industrialism has grown *pari passu* with population. Now, where markets are expanding, the two besetting problems of all industrial societies solve themselves. New inventions may create technological unemployment; but expanding markets cure it as it's made. Each individual may possess inadequate purchasing power; but the total number of individuals is steadily rising. Many small purchasing powers do as much as fewer big ones.

Our population is now stationary, will soon decline. Shrinkage instead of expansion of markets. Therefore, no more automatic solution of economic problems. Birth control necessitates the use of co-ordinating political intelligence. There must be a large-scale plan. Otherwise the machine won't work. In other words, politicians will have to be about twenty times as intelligent as heretofore. Will the supply of intelligence be equal to the demand?

And of course intelligence, as Miller's always insisting, isn't isolated. The act of intelligently planning modifies the emotions of the planners. Consider English politics. We've made plenty of reforms—without ever accepting the principles underlying them. (Compare the king's titles with his present position. Compare our protestations that we'll never have anything to do with socialism with the realities of state control.) There are no large-scale plans in English politics, and hardly any thinking in terms of first principles. With what results? Among others, that English politics have been on the whole very good-natured. The reason is simple. Deal with practical problems as they arise and without reference to first principles; politics are a matter of higgling. Now higglers lose tempers, but don't normally regard one another as fiends in human form. But this is precisely what men of principle and systematic planners can't help doing. A principle is, by definition, *right*; a plan, *for the good of the people*. Axioms from which it logically follows that those who disagree with you and won't help to realize your plan are enemies of goodness and humanity. No longer men and women, but personifications of evil, fiends incarnate. Killing men and women is wrong; but killing fiends is a duty. Hence the Holy Office, hence Robespierre and the Ogpu. Men with strong religious and revolutionary faith, men with well-thought-out plans for improving the lot of their fellows, whether in this world or the next, have been more systematically and cold-bloodedly cruel than any others. Thinking in terms of first principles entails acting with machine-guns. A government with a comprehensive plan for the betterment of society is a government that uses torture. *Per contra*, if you never consider principles and have no plan, but deal with situations as they arise, piecemeal, you can afford to have unarmed policemen, liberty of speech, and habeas corpus. Admirable. But what happens when an industrial society learns (*a*) how to make technological advances at a constantly accelerating speed, and (*b*) to prevent conception? Answer: it must either plan itself in accordance with general political and economic principles, or else break down. But governments with principles and plans have generally been tyrannies making use of police spies and terrorism. Must we resign ourselves to slavery and torture for the sake of co-ordination?

Breakdown on the one hand, Inquisition and Ogpu rule on the other. A real dilemma, if the plan is mainly economic and political. But think in terms of individual men, women, and children, not of States, Religions, Economic Systems, and suchlike abstractions: there is then a hope of passing between the horns. For if you begin by considering concrete people, you see at once that freedom from coercion is a necessary condition of their developing into full-grown human beings; that the form of economic prosperity which consists in possessing unnecessary objects doesn't make for individual well-being; that a leisure filled with passive amusements is not a blessing; that the conveniences of urban life are bought at a high physiological and mental price; that an education which allows you to use yourself wrongly is almost valueless; that a social organization resulting in individuals being forced, every few years, to go out and murder one another must be wrong. And so on. Whereas if you start from the State, the Faith, the Economic System, there is a complete transvaluation of values. Individuals must murder one another, because the interests of the Nation demand it; must be educated to think of ends and disregard means, because the schoolmasters are there and don't know of any other method; must live in towns, must have leisure to read the newspapers and go to the movies, must be encouraged to buy things they don't need, because the industrial system exists and has to be kept going; must be coerced and enslaved, because otherwise they might think for themselves and give trouble to their rulers.

The Sabbath was made for man. But man now behaves like the Pharisees and insists that he is made for all the things—science, industry, nation, money, religion, schools—which were really made for him. Why? Because he is so little aware of his own interests as a human being that he feels irresistibly tempted to sacrifice himself to these idols. There is no remedy except to become aware of one's interests as a human being, and, having become aware, to learn to act on that awareness. Which means learning to use the self and learning to direct the mind. It 's almost wearisome, the way one always comes back to the same point. Wouldn't it be nice, for a change, if there were another way out of our difficulties! A short cut. A method requiring no greater personal effort than recording a vote or ordering some 'enemy of society' to be shot. A salvation from outside, like a dose of calomel.

To-day Helen talked again about Miller. Talked with a kind of resentful vehemence. (Certain memories, certain trains of thought, are like the aching tooth one must always be touching just to make sure it still hurts.) Non-violence: this time, it was not only a mere trick, insignificant; it was also wrong. If you 're convinced people are wicked, you 've no right not to try to make them behave decently. Agreed: but how are you most likely to succeed? By violence? But violence may make people assume the forms of good behaviour for the moment; it won't produce the reality of genuine and permanent good behaviour. She accused me of shirking real issues, taking refuge in vague idealism. It all boiled down at last to her vengeful hatred for the Nazis. Peace all round, except for Nazis and, by contagion, Fascists. These should be punished, painfully exterminated—

like rats. (Note that we 're all ninety-nine per cent pacifists. Sermon on Mount, provided we 're allowed to play Tamburlane or Napoleon in our particular one per cent of selected cases. Peace, perfect peace, so long as we can have the war that suits us. Result: every one is the predestined victim of somebody else's exceptionally permissible war. Ninety-nine per cent pacifism is merely another name for militarism. If there 's to be peace, there must be hundred per cent pacifism.)

We exchanged a lot of arguments; then, for some time, said nothing. Finally, she began to talk about Giesebrecht. Executed after God only knew what tortures. 'Can you be surprised if I feel like this about the Nazis?' Not surprised at all—any more than by the Nazis themselves. Surprising would have been tolerance on their part, forgiveness on hers. 'But the person who might have forgiven vanished when Ekki vanished. I was good while he was with me. Now I 'm bad. If he were still here I might be able to forgive them for taking him away. But that 's an impossible condition. I can 't ever forgive.' (There were answers to that, of course. But it didn't seem to me that I had any right, being what I am, acting as I still do, to make them.) She went on to describe what he had been to her. Someone she didn't have to be ashamed of loving, as she had had to be ashamed of loving Gerry. Someone she had been able to love with her whole being—'not just occasionally and with part of me, on a roof; or just for fun, in a studio, before dinner.' And she came back to the same point—that Ekki had made her kind, truthful, unselfish, as well as happy. 'I was somebody else while I was with him. Or perhaps I was myself—for the first time.' Then: 'Do you remember how you laughed at me that time on the roof, when I talked about my real self?' Did I not remember! I hadn't even been real enough, at that moment, to perceive my own remoteness from reality. Afterwards, when I saw her crying, when I knew that I 'd been deliberately refusing to love her, I did perceive it.

After a silence: 'At the beginning I believe I could have loved you almost as much as I loved Ekki.'

And I 'd done my best, of course, to prevent her.

Her face brightened with sudden malicious derision. Like her mother's. 'Extraordinary how funny a tragedy is, when you look at it from the wrong side!' Then, still smiling: 'Do you imagine you care for me now? Lo-ove me, in a word?'

Not only imagined; did really.

She held up a hand, like a policeman. 'No film stuff here.

I 'd have to throw you out if you began that game. Which I don't want to do. Because, oddly enough, I really like you. In spite of everything. I never thought I should. Not after that dog. But I do.' That painful brightness came back into the face. 'All the things I thought I should never do again! Such as eating a square meal; but I was doing it after three days. And wanting to make love. That seemed inconceivably sacrilegious. And yet within three or four months it was occurring to me, I was having dreams about it. And one of these days, I suppose, I shall actually be doing it. Doing it "without any obligation," as they say when they send you the vacuum-cleaner on approval. Exactly as I did before.' She laughed again. 'Most probably with you, Anthony. Till the next dog comes down. Would you be ready to begin again?'

Not on the old basis. I 'd want to give more, receive more.

'It takes two to give and receive.' Then she switched the conversation on to another line; who was I having an affair with at the moment? And when I answered: with nobody, asked whether it wasn't difficult and disagreeable to be continent, and why I should want to imitate Mark Staithes. Tried to explain that I wasn't imitating Mark, that Mark's asceticism was undertaken for its own sake and above all for *his*, that he might feel himself more separate, more intensely himself, in a better position to look down on other people. Whereas what I was trying to do was to avoid occasions for emphasizing individual separateness through sensuality. Hate, anger, ambition explicitly deny human unity; lust and greed do the same indirectly and by implication—by insisting exclusively on particular individual experiences and, in the case of lust, using other people merely as a means for obtaining such experiences. Less dangerously so than malevolence and the passions for superiority, prestige, social position, lust is still incompatible with pacifism; can be made compatible only when it ceases to be an end in itself and becomes a means towards the unification through love of two separate individuals. Such particular union, a paradigm of union in general.

### *11th September* 1934

With Miller to see a show of scientific films. Development of the sea urchin. Fertilization, cell division, growth. A renewal of last year's almost nightmarish vision of a more-than-Bergsonian life force, of an ultimate Dark God, much darker, stranger, and more violent than any that Lawrence imagined. Raw material that, on its own inhuman plane, is already a perfectly finished product. A picture of earthworms followed. Week-long hermaphroditic love-making, worm to worm, within a tube of slime. Then an incredibly beautiful film showing the life-history of the blow-fly. The eggs. The grubs on their piece of decaying meat. Snow-white, like a flock of sheep on a meadow. Hurrying away from light. Then, after five days' growth, descending to the earth, burrowing, making a cocoon. In twelve more days, the fly emerges. Fantastic process of resurrection! An organ in the head is inflated like a balloon. Blown up so large, that the walls of the cocoon are split. The fly wriggles out. Positively now, instead of negatively phototropic, as it was as a grub. (Minor and incidental miracle!) Burrowing upwards, towards the light. At the surface, you see it literally pumping up its soft, wet body with air, smoothing out its crumpled wings by forcing blood into the veins. Astonishing and moving spectacle.

I put the question to Miller: what will be the influence of the spread of knowledge such as this? Knowledge of a world incomparably more improbable and more beautiful than the imaginings of any myth-maker. A world, only a few years ago, completely unknown to all but a handful of people. What the effects of its general discovery by all? Miller laughed. 'It will have exactly as much or as little effect as people want it to have. Those who prefer to think about sex and money will go on thinking about sex and money. However loudly the movies proclaim the glory of God.' Persistence of the ingenuous notion that the response to favourable circumstance is inevitably and automatically good. Raw material, once again, to be worked up. One goes on believing in automatic progress, because one *wants* to cherish this stupidity: it 's so consoling. Consoling, because it puts the whole responsibility for everything you do or fail to do on somebody or something other than yourself

### 15*th September* 1934

Have built up during the last few days a meditation on a phrase of William Penn's. 'Force may subdue, but Love gains; and he who forgives first wins the laurel.'

'Force may subdue.' I visualize men using force. First, hand to hand. With fists, knives, truncheons, whips. Weals, red or livid, across flesh. Lacerations, bruises, the broken bone sticking in jags through the skin, faces horribly swollen and bleeding. Then try to imagine, in my own body, the pain of a crushed finger, of blows with a stick or lash across the face, the searing touch of red-hot iron. All the short-range brutalities and tortures. Then, force from a distance. Machine-gun bullets, high explosives, gases, choking or blistering, fire.

Force, finally, in the shape of economic coercion. Starved children, pot-bellied and with arms and legs like sticks. Women old at thirty. And those living corpses, standing in silence at the street corners in Durham or South Wales, shuffling in silence through the mud.

Yes, force may subdue. Subdue in death, subdue by wounds, subdue through starvation and terror. Vision of frightened faces, of abject gestures of servility. The manager at his desk, hectoring. The clerk cringing under the threat of dismissal. Force—the act of violently denying man's ultimate unity with man.

'Force may subdue, but Love gains.' I rehearse the history of Penn himself among the Redskins. Remember how Miller used to allay the suspicious hostility of the Indians in the mountain villages. Think of Pennell on the North-West Frontier; of the Quakers during the Russian famine; of Elizabeth Fry and Damien.

Next I consider the translations of love into terms of politics. Campbell-Bannerman's insistence that reparation should be made in South Africa—in the teeth of the protests, the Cassandra-like prophesyings of such 'sane and practical men' as Arthur Balfour. Love gains even in the clumsy, distorted form of a good political constitution. 'He who forgives first wins the laurel.' In South Africa, the English forgave those whom they had wronged—which is only less difficult than forgiving those by whom one has been wronged—and so secured a prize which they couldn't have won by continued coercion. No prize has been won since the last war, because no combatant has yet forgiven those by whom he has been wronged or those he has wronged.

Consistently applied to any situation, love always gains. It is an empirically determined fact. Love is the best policy. The best not only in regard to those loved, but also in regard to the one who loves. For love is self-energizing. Produces the means whereby its policy can be carried out. In order to go on loving, one needs patience, courage, endurance. But the process of loving generates these means to its own continuance. Love gains because, for the sake of that which is loved, the lover is patient and brave.

And what is loved? Goodness and the potentialities for goodness in all human beings—even those most busily engaged in refusing to actualize those potentialities for goodness in relation to the lover himself. If sufficiently great, love can cast out the fear even of malevolently active enemies.

I end by holding the thought of goodness, still, as it were, before the eyes of my mind. Goodness, immanent in its potentialities transcendent as a realized ideal; conceivable in its perfection, but also susceptible of being realized in practice, of being embodied at least partially in any situation in which we may find ourselves. 'The thought of goodness'—it is the wrong phrase. For in reality it is a whole system of thoughts and sentiments. It is this whole system that I hold, quite still, perceived simultaneously in its entirety—hold it without words, without images, undiscursively, as a single, simple entity. Hold it—then at last must retreat again, back into words, back at last (but refreshed, but made more conscious, but replenished, as it were) into ordinary life.

### *17th September* 1934

Was called in by Helen to help entertain her sister and brother-in-law, back on leave from India. Had to put on evening clothes—the first time this year—because Colin could not allow himself to be seen in a theatre or at the Savoy Grill in anything but a white tie. A depressing evening. Joyce sickly and gaunt before her time. Colin furtively interested in plumper, fresher bodies. She, jealous and nagging; he, resentful at being tied to her and the children, blaming her for the strictness of his own code, which doesn't allow him to be the libertine he would like to be. Each chronically impatient with the other. Every now and then an outburst of bad temper, an exchange of angry or spiteful words. Colin had other grievances as well. England, it seemed, didn't show sufficient respect to the officer and gent. Cabmen were impertinent, the lower classes jostled him in the streets. 'They call this a white man's country.' (This, after the second 'quick one' in the bar of the theatre between the acts.) 'It isn't. Give me Poona every time.'

Reflect that we all have our Poonas, bolt-holes from unpleasant reality. The danger, as Miller is always insisting, of meditation becoming such a bolt-hole. Quietism can be mere self-indulgence. Charismata like masturbations. Masturbations, however, that are dignified, by the amateur mystics who practise them, with all the most sacred names of religion and philosophy. 'The contemplative life.' It can be made a kind of high-brow substitute for Marlene Dietrich: a subject for erotic musings in the twilight. Meditation—valuable, not as a pleasurable end; only as a means for effecting desirable changes in the personality and mode of existence. To live contemplatively is not to live in some deliciously voluptuous or flattering Poona; it is to live in London, but to live there in a non-Cockney style.

### *21st September* 1934

Remarks by St. Teresa. 'Let us look at our own faults, and not at other people's. We ought not to insist on every one following our footsteps, nor to take upon ourselves to give instructions in spirituality when, perhaps, we do not even know what it is. Zeal for the good of souls, though given us by God, may often lead us astray.' To which add this: 'It is a great grace of God to practise self-examination, but too much is as bad as too little, as they say; believe me, by God's help we shall accomplish more by contemplating the divinity than by keeping our eyes fixed on ourselves.' God may or may not exist. But there is the empirical fact that contemplation of the divinity—of goodness in its most unqualified form—is a method of realizing that goodness to some slight degree in one's life, and results, often, in an experience as if of help towards that realization of goodness, help from some being other than one's ordinary self and immensely superior to it. Christian God and the Buddhist's primal Mind—interpretations of concrete experiences, the Buddhist being the rationalization of a state further removed from the normal than the Christian. Christians, of course, have often experienced that state and found great difficulties in explaining it in orthodox terms. Both conceptions legitimate—just as both macroscopical and microscopical views of matter are legitimate. We look at the universe with a certain kind of physico-mental apparatus. That apparatus can respond only to certain stimuli. Within relatively narrow limits, it is adjustable. The nature of the facts which each of us perceives as primary and given depends on the nature of the individual instrument and on the adjustment we have been brought up, or deliberately chosen, to give it. From these data one can draw inferences. Which may be logically sound or unsound. Any philosophy is intellectually legitimate if, one, it starts from facts which, for the philosopher, are data and if, two, the logical construction based on these facts is sound. But an intellectually is not the same as a morally legitimate philosophy. We can adjust our instrument deliberately, by an act of the will. This means that we can will modifications in the personal experiences which underlie our philosophy, the data from which we argue. Problem: to build really solid logical bridges between given facts and philosophical inferences. All but insoluble. No bullet proof arguments for any of the main cosmological theories. What, then, shall we do? Stick, so far as possible, to the empirical facts—always remembering that these are modifiable by any one who chooses to modify the perceiving mechanism. So that one can see, for example, either irremediable senselessness and turpitude, or else actualizable potentialities for good—whichever one likes; it is a question of choice.

### *30th October* 1934

Mark, at dinner, said he 'd been re-reading *Anna Karenina.* Found it good, as novels go. But complained of the profound untruthfulness of even the best imaginative literature. And he began to catalogue its omissions. Almost total neglect of those small physiological events that decide whether day-to-day living shall have a pleasant or unpleasant tone. Excretion, for example, with its power to make or mar the day. Digestion. And, for the heroines of novel and drama, menstruation. Then the small illnesses—catarrh, rheumatism, headache, eye-strain. The chronic physical disabilities—ramifying out (as in the case of deformity or impotence) into luxuriant insanities. And conversely the sudden accessions, from unknown visceral and muscular sources, of more than ordinary health. No mention, next, of the part played by mere sensations in producing happiness. Hot bath, for example, taste of bacon, feel of fur, smell of freesias. In life, an empty cigarette-case may cause more distress than the absence of a lover; never in books. Almost equally complete omission of the small distractions that fill the greater part of human lives. Reading the papers; looking into shops; exchanging gossip; with all the varieties of day-dreaming, from lying in bed, imagining what one would do if one had the right lover, income, face, social position, to sitting at the picture palace passively accepting ready-made day-dreams from Hollywood.

Lying by omission turns inevitably into positive lying. The implications of literature are that human beings are controlled, if not by reason, at least by comprehensible, well-organized, avowable sentiments. Whereas the facts are quite different. Sometimes the sentiments come in, sometimes they don't. All for love, or the world well lost; but love may be the title of nobility given to an inordinate liking for a particular person's smell or texture, a lunatic desire for the repetition of a sensation produced by some particular dexterity. Or consider those cases (seldom published, but how numerous, as any one in a position to know can tell!), those cases of the eminent statesmen, churchmen, lawyers, captains of industry—seemingly so sane, demonstrably so intelligent, publicly so high-principled; but, in private, under irresistible compulsion towards brandy, towards young men, towards little girls in trains, towards exhibitionism, towards gambling or hoarding, towards bullying, towards being whipped, towards all the innumerable, crazy perversions of the lusts for money and power and position on the one hand, for sexual pleasure on the other. Mere tics and tropisms, lunatic and unavowable cravings—these play as much part in human life as the organized and recognized sentiments. And imaginative literature suppresses the fact. Propagates an enormous lie about the nature of men and women.

'Rightly, no doubt. Because, if human beings were shown what they 're really like, they 'd either kill one another as vermin, or hang themselves. But meanwhile, I really can't be bothered to read any more imaginative literature. Lies don't interest me. However poetically they may be expressed. They 're just a bore.'

Agreed with Mark that imaginative literature wasn't doing its duty. That it was essential to know everything—and to know it, not merely through scientific text-books, but also in a form that would have power to bring the facts home to the whole mind, not merely to the intellect. A complete expression (in terms of imaginative literature) leading to complete knowledge (with the whole mind) of the complete truth: indispensable preliminary condition of any remedial action, any serious attempt at the construction of a genuinely human being. Construction from within, by training in proper use of the self—training, simultaneously physical and mental. Construction, at the same time, from without, by means of social and economic arrangements devised in the light of a complete knowledge of the individual, and of the way in which the individual can modify himself.

Mark only laughed, and said I reminded him of the men who go round from house to house selling electric washing-machines.

### *4th November* 1934

Very good meeting in Newcastle with Miller and Purchas. Large and enthusiastic crowds—predominantly of the dispossessed. Note the significant fact that pacifism is in inverse ratio, generally, to prosperity. The greater the poverty, the longer the unemployment, the more whole-hearted the determination not to fight again, and the more complete the scepticism about the conventional idols, Empire, National Honour, and the like. A negative attitude closely correlated with bad economic conditions. Therefore not to be relied on. Such pacifism is without autonomous life. At the mercy, first of all, of any one who comes along with money—and threats of war would lead to a vast increase of employment. At the mercy, in the second place, of any one who comes along with an alluring positive doctrine—however crazy and criminal its positiveness may be. The mind abhors a vacuum. Negative pacifism and scepticism about existing institutions are just holes in the mind, emptinesses waiting to be filled. Fascism or communism have sufficient positive content to act as fillers. Someone with the talents of Hitler may suddenly appear. The negative void will be pumped full in a twinkling. These disillusioned pacifist sceptics will be transformed overnight into drilled fanatics of nationalism, class war, or whatever it may be. Question: have we time to fill the vacuum with positive pacifism? Or, having the time, have we the ability?

### *Christmas Day* 1934

God—a person or not a person? *Quien sabe?* Only revelation can decide such metaphysical questions. And revelation isn't playing the game—is equivalent to pulling three aces of trumps from up your sleeve.

Of more significance is the practical question. Which gives a man more power to realize goodness—belief in a personal or an impersonal God? Answer: it depends. Some minds work one way, some another. Mine, as it happens, finds no need, indeed, finds it impossible to think of the world in terms of personality. Patanjali says you may believe in a personal God, or not, according to taste. The psychological results will be the same in either case.

For those whose nature demands personality as a source of energy, but who find it impossible to believe that the universe is run by a person in any sense of the word that we can possibly understand — what 's the right policy? In most cases, they reject any practice which might be called religious. But this is throwing away the baby with the bath water. The desired relationship with a personality can be historical, not ontological. A contact, not with somebody existing at present as manager of the universe, but with somebody known to have existed at some time in the past. The Imitation of Christ (or of any other historical character) is just as effective if the model be regarded as having existed there, then, as it is if the model be conceived as existing here, now. And meditation on goodness, communication with goodness, contemplation of goodness, are demonstrably effective means of realizing goodness in life, even when that which is meditated on, communicated with, and contemplated, is not a person, but a general mind, or even an ideal supposed to exist only in human minds. The fundamental problem is practical—to work out systems of psychological exercises for all types of men and women. Catholicism has many systems of mental prayer—Ignatian, Franciscan, Liguorian, Carmelite, and so on. Hinduism, Northern, Southern, and Zen Buddhism also have a variety of practices. There is a great work to be done here. Collecting and collating information from all these sources. Consulting books and, more important, people who have actually practised what is in the books, have had experience of teaching novices. In time, it might be possible to establish a complete and definite *Ars Contemplativa.* A series of techniques, adapted to every type of mind. Techniques for meditating on, communicating with, and contemplating goodness. Ends in themselves and at the same time means for realizing some of that goodness in practice.

### *1st January* 1935

Machinery and good organization—modern inventions; and, like all blessings, have to be paid for. In many ways. One item is the general belief, encouraged by mechanical and social efficiency, that progress is automatic and can be imposed from outside. We, as individuals, need do nothing about it. Liquidate undesirables, distribute enough money and goods—all will be well. It is a reversion to magic, a pandering to man's natural sloth. Note the striking way in which this tendency runs through the whole of modern life, cropping up at every point. There seems no obvious connection between the Webbs and the Soviets on the one hand and Modern Catholicism on the other. But what profound subterranean resemblances! The recent Catholic revival essentially a revival of sacraments. From a Catholic point of view, this is a sacramental age. Magic power of sacraments regarded as sufficient for salvation. Mental prayer conspicuously absent. Exact analogy to the Webbs-Soviet idea of progress from without, through machinery and efficient organization. For English Catholics, sacraments are the psychological equivalents of tractors in Russia.

[*Narrative in the Third Person*]

Unity of mankind, unity of all life, all being even.

Physical unity, first of all. Unity even in diversity, even in separation. Separate patterns, but everywhere alike. Everywhere the same constellations of the ultimate units of energy. The same on the surface of the sun as in the living flesh warmed by the sun's radiance; in the scented cluster of buddleia flowers as in the blue sea and the clouds on the horizon; in the drunken Mexican's pistol as in the dark dried blood on that mangled face among the rocks, the fresh blood spattered scarlet over Helen's naked body, the drops oozing from the raw contusion on Mark's knee.

Identical patterns, and identical patternings of patterns. He held the thought of them in his mind, and, along with it, the thought of life incessantly moving among the patterns, selecting and rejecting for its own purposes. Life building up simpler into more complex patterns—identically complex through vast ranges of animate being.

The sperm enters the egg, the cell divides and divides, to become at last this man, that rat or horse. A cow's pituitary will make frogs breed out of season. Urine of a pregnant woman brings the mouse on heat. Sheep's thyroid transforms the axolotl from a gilled larva into an air-breathing salamander, the cretinous dwarf into a well-grown and intelligent human being. Between one form of animal life and another, patterns are interchangeable. Interchangeable also between animal and plant, plant and the inanimate world. Patterns in seed and leaf and root, patterns built up from simpler patterns existent in the air and soil—these can be assimilated and transformed by insect, reptile, mammal, fish.

The unity of life. Unity demonstrated even in the destruction of one life by another. Life and all being are one. Otherwise no living thing could ever derive sustenance from another or from the unliving substances around it. One even in destruction, one in spite of separation. Each organism is unique. Unique and yet united with all other organisms in the sameness of its ultimate parts; unique above a substratum of physical identity.

And minds—minds also are unique, but unique above a substratum of mental identity. Identity and inter-changeableness of love, trust, courage. Fearless affection restores the lunatic to sanity, transforms the hostile savage into a friend, tames the wild animal. The mental pattern of love can be transferred from one mind to another and still retain its virtue, just as the physical pattern of a hormone can be transferred, with all its effectiveness, from one body to another.

And not only love, but hate as well; not only trust, but suspicion; not only kindness, generosity, courage, but also malevolence and greed and fear.

Divisive emotions; but the fact that they can be interchanged, can be transferred from mind to mind and retain all their original passion, is a demonstration of the fundamental unity of minds.

Reality of unity, but equal reality of division—greater reality, indeed, of division. No need to meditate the fact of division. One is constantly aware of it. Constantly aware of being unique and separate; only sometimes, and then most often only intellectually, only as the result of a process of discursive thought, aware of being one with other minds, other lives, and all being. Occasionally an intuition of unity, an intuition coming at random, or sought for, step by step, in meditation.

One, one, one, he repeated; but one in division; united and yet separate.

Evil is the accentuation of division; good, whatever makes for unity with other lives and other beings. Pride, hatred, anger—the essentially evil sentiments; and essentially evil because they are all intensifications of the given reality of separateness, because they insist upon division and uniqueness, because they reject and deny other lives and beings. Lust and greed are also insistences upon uniqueness, but insistences which do not entail any negative awareness of the others from whom the unique being is divided. Lust only says, 'I must have pleasure,' not 'You must have pain.' Greed in its pure state is merely a demand for my satisfaction, not for your exclusion from satisfaction. They are wrong in emphasizing the separate self; but less wrong than pride or hatred or anger, because their self-emphasis is not accompanied by denial of others.

But why division at all? Why, unavoidably, even in the completest love, and, at the other end of the scale of being, even in that which is or seems to be below right and wrong, why must the evil of separation persist? Separation even of saint from saint, and separation even of mere physical pattern from mere physical pattern. One man cannot eat for another. The best must think, must enjoy and suffer, must touch, see, smell, hear, taste in isolation. The good man is merely a less completely closed universe than the bad; but still closed, even as the atom is closed.

And, of course, if there is to be existence—existence as we know it—being must be organized in closed universes. Minds like ours can only perceive undifferentiated unity as nothing. Unescapable paradox that we should desire that *n* should be equal to one, but that, in fact, we should always find that one is equal to nought.

Separation, diversity—conditions of our existence. Conditions upon which we possess life and consciousness, know right and wrong and have the power to choose between them, recognize truth, have experience of beauty. But separation is evil. Evil, then, is the condition of life, the condition of being aware, of knowing what is good and beautiful.

That which is demanded, that which men come finally to demand of themselves, is the realization of union between beings who would be nothing if they were not separate; is the actualization of goodness by creatures who, if they were not evil, would not exist. Impossibility—but none the less demanded.

'Born under one law, to another bound.'

He himself, Anthony went on to think, he himself had chosen to regard the whole process as either pointless or a practical joke. Yes, *chosen*. For it had been an act of the will. If it were all nonsense or a joke, then he was at liberty to read his books and exercise his talents for sarcastic comment; there was no reason why he shouldn't sleep with any presentable woman who was ready to sleep with him. If it weren't nonsense, if there were some significance, then he could no longer live irresponsibly. There were duties towards himself and others and the nature of things. Duties with whose fulfilment the sleeping and the indiscriminate reading and the habit of detached irony would interfere. He had chosen to think it nonsense, and nonsense for more than twenty years the thing had seemed to be—nonsense, in spite of occasional uncomfortable intimations that there might be a point, and that the point was precisely in what he had chosen to regard as the pointlessness, the practical joke. And now at last it was clear, now by some kind of immediate experience he knew that the point was in the paradox, in the fact that unity was the beginning and unity the end, and that in the meantime the condition of life and all existence was separation, which was equivalent to evil. Yes, the point, he insisted, is that one demands of oneself the achievement of the impossible. The point is that, even with the best will in the world, the separate, evil universe of a person or a physical pattern can never unite itself completely with other lives and beings, or the totality of life and being. Even for the highest goodness the struggle is without end; for never in the nature of present things can the shut become the wholly open; goodness can never free itself completely from evil. It is a test, an education—searching, difficult, drawn out through a lifetime, perhaps through long series of lifetimes. Lifetimes passed in the attempts to open up farther and a little farther the closed universe that perpetually tends to spring shut the moment that effort is relaxed. Passed in overcoming the separating passions of hate and malice and pride. Passed in making still the self-emphasizing cravings. Passed in constant efforts to realize unity with other lives and other modes of being. To experience it in the act of love and compassion. To experience it on another plane through meditation, in the insight of direct intuition. Unity beyond the turmoil of separations and divisions. Goodness beyond the possibility of evil. But always the fact of separation persists, always evil remains the very condition of life and being. There must be no relaxation of the opening pressure. But even for the best of us, the consummation is still immeasurably remote.

Meanwhile there are love and compassion. Constantly obstructed. But, oh, let them be made indefatigable, implacable to surmount all obstacles, the inner sloth, the distaste, the intellectual scorn; and, from without, the other's aversions and suspicions. Affection, compassion—and also, meanwhile, this contemplative approach, this effort to realize the unity of lives and being with the intellect, and at last, perhaps, intuitively in an act of complete understanding. From one argument to another, step by step, towards a consummation where there is no more discourse, only experience, only unmediated knowledge, as of a colour, a perfume, a musical sound. Step by step towards the experience of being no longer wholly separate, but united at the depths with other lives, with the rest of being. United in peace. In peace, he repeated, in peace, in peace. In the depth of every mind, peace. The same peace for all, continuous between mind and mind. At the surface, the separate waves, the whirlpools, the spray; but below them the continuous and undifferentiated expanse of sea, becoming calmer as it deepens, till at last there is an absolute stillness. Dark peace in the depths. A dark peace that is the same for all who can descend to it. Peace that by a strange paradox is the substance and source of the storm at the surface. Born of peace, the waves yet destroy peace; destroy it, but are necessary; for without the storm on the surface there would be no existence, no knowledge of goodness, no effort to allay the leaping frenzy of evil, no rediscovery of the underlying calm, no realization that the substance of the frenzy is the same as the substance of peace.

Frenzy of evil and separation. In peace there is unity. Unity with other lives. Unity with all being. For beneath all being, beneath the countless identical but separate patterns, beneath the attractions and repulsions, lies peace. The same peace as underlies the frenzy of the mind. Dark peace, immeasurably deep. Peace from pride and hatred and anger, peace from cravings and aversions, peace from all the separating frenzies. Peace through liberation, for peace is achieved freedom. Freedom and at the same time truth. The truth of unity actually experienced. Peace in the depths, under the storm, far down below the leaping of the waves, the frantically flying spray. Peace in this profound subaqueous night, peace in this silence, this still emptiness where there is no more time, where there are no more images, no more words. Nothing but the experience of peace; peace as a dark void beyond all personal life, and yet itself a form of life more intense, for all its diffuseness, for all the absence of aim or desire, richer and of finer quality than ordinary life. Peace beyond peace, focused at first, brought together, then opening out in a kind of boundless space. Peace at the tip, as it were, of a narrowing cone of concentration and elimination, a cone with its base in the distractions of the heaving surface of life and its point in the underlying darkness. And in the darkness the tip of one cone meets the tip of another; and, from a single, focal point, peace expands and expands towards a base immeasurably distant and so wide that its circle is the ground and source of all life, all being. Cone reversed from the broken and shifting light of the surface; cone reversed and descending to a point of concentrated darkness; thence, in another cone, expanding and expanding through the darkness towards, yes! some other light, steady, untroubled, as utterly calm as the darkness out of which it emerges. Cone reversed into cone upright. Passage from wide stormy light to the still focus of darkness; and thence, beyond the focus, through widening darkness into another light. From storm to calm and on through yet profounder and intenser peace to the final consummation, the ultimate light that is the source and substance of all things; source of the darkness, the void, the submarine night of living calm; source finally of the waves and the frenzy of the spray—forgotten now. For now there is only the darkness expanding and deepening, deepening into light; there is only this final peace, this consciousness of being no more separate, this illumination. . . .

*From* EYELESS IN GAZA

# TRAVEL

*G 935

# WHY NOT STAY AT HOME?

Some people travel on business, some in search of health. But it is neither the sickly nor the men of affairs who fill the Grand Hotels and the pockets of their proprietors. It is those who travel 'for pleasure,' as the phrase goes. What Epicurus, who never travelled except when he was banished, sought in his own garden, our tourists seek abroad. And do they find their happiness? Those who frequent the places where they resort must often find this question, with a tentative answer in the negative, fairly forced upon them. For tourists are, in the main, a very gloomy-looking tribe. I have seen much brighter faces at a funeral than in the Piazza of St. Mark's. Only when they can band together and pretend, for a brief, precarious hour, that they are at home, do the majority of tourists look really happy. One wonders why they come abroad.

The fact is that very few travellers really like travelling. If they go to the trouble and expense of travelling, it is not so much from curiosity, for fun, or because they like to see things beautiful and strange, as out of a kind of snobbery. People travel for the same reason as they collect works of art: because the best people do it. To have been to certain spots on the earth's surface is socially correct; and having been there, one is superior to those who have not. Moreover, travelling gives one something to talk about when one gets home. The subjects of conversation are not so numerous that one can neglect an opportunity of adding to one's store.

To justify this snobbery, a series of myths has gradually been elaborated. The places which it is socially smart to have visited are aureoled with glamour, till they are made to appear, for those who have not been there, like so many fabled Babylons or Bagdads. Those who have travelled have a personal interest in cultivating and disseminating these fables. For if Paris and Monte Carlo are really so marvellous as it is generally supposed, by the inhabitants of Bradford or Milwaukee, of Tomsk and Bergen, that they are—why, then, the merit of the travellers who have actually visited these places is the greater, and their superiority over the stay-at-homes the more enormous. It is for this reason (and because they pay the hotel proprietors and the steamship companies) that the fables are studiously kept alive.

Few things are more pathetic than the spectacle of inexperienced travellers, brought up on these myths, desperately doing their best to make external reality square with fable. It is for the sake of the myths and, less consciously, in the name of snobbery that they left their homes; to admit disappointment in the reality would be to admit their own foolishness in having believed the fables and would detract from their merit in having undertaken the pilgrimage. Out of the hundreds of thousands of Anglo-Saxons who frequent the night-clubs and dancing-saloons of Paris, there are a good many, no doubt, who genuinely like that sort of thing. But there are also very many who do not. In their hearts, secretly, they are bored and a little disgusted. But they have been brought up to believe in a fabulous 'Gay Paree,' where everything is deliriously exciting and where alone it is possible to see what is technically known as Life. Conscientiously, therefore, they strive, when they come to Paris, to be gay. Night after night the dance-halls and the bordellos are thronged by serious young compatriots of Emerson and Matthew Arnold, earnestly engaged in trying to see life, neither very steadily nor whole, through the ever-thickening mists of Heidsieck and Roederer.

Still more courageously determined are their female companions; for they, mostly (unless they are extremely 'modern'), have not the Roederer to assist them in finding Paris gay. The saddest sight I ever saw was in a Montmartre *boîte* at about five o'clock of an autumn morning. At a table in a corner of the hall sat three young American girls, quite unattended, adventurously seeing life by themselves. In front of them, on the table, stood the regulation bottle of champagne; but for preference—perhaps on principle—they were sipping lemonade. The jazz band played on monotonously; the tired drummer nodded over his drums, the saxophonist yawned into his saxophone. In couples, in staggering groups, the guests departed. But grimly, indomitably, in spite of their fatique, in spite of the boredom which so clearly expressed itself on their charming and ingenuous faces, the three young girls sat on. They were still there when I left at sunrise. What stories, I reflected, they would tell when they got home again! And how envious they would make their untravelled friends. 'Paris is just wonderful. . . .'

To the Parisians, the fable brings in several hundred milliards of good money. They give it a generous publicity; business is business. But if I were the manager of a Montmartre dancing-saloon, I think I should tell my waiters to act their gay parts with a little more conviction. 'My men,' I should say to them, 'you ought to look as though you believed in the fable out of which we make our living. Smile, be merry. Your present expression, which is a mingling of weariness, disgusted contempt for your clients and cynical rapacity, is not inspiring. One day the clients might be sober enough to notice it. And where should we be then?'

But Paris and Monte Carlo are not the only resorts of pilgrimage. There are also Rome and Florence. There are picture galleries, churches, and ruins, as well as shops and casinos. And the snobbery which decrees that one must like Art—or, to be more accurate, that one should have visited the places where Art is to be seen—is almost as tyrannous as that which bids one visit the places where one can see Life.

All of us are more or less interested in Life—even in that rather smelly slice of it that is to be found in Montmartre. But a taste for Art—or at any rate the sort of art that is found in galleries and churches—is by no means universal. Hence the case of the poor tourists who, from motives of snobbery, visit Rome and Florence, is even more pathetic than the case of those who repair for the same reasons to Paris and Monte Carlo. Tourists 'doing' a church wear a mask of dutiful interest; but what lassitude, what utter weariness of spirit looks out, too often, at their eyes! And the weariness is felt, within, still more acutely because, precisely, of the necessity of simulating this rapt attentiveness, of even going hypocritically into raptures over the things that are starred in the Baedeker. There come moments when flesh and blood can stand the strain no longer. Philistinism absolutely refuses to pay the tribute it owes to taste. Exasperated and defiant, the tourist swears that he won't so much as put his nose inside another church, preferring to spend his days in the lounge of the hotel, reading the continental *Daily Mail*.

I remember witnessing one of these rebellions at Venice. A motor-boat company was advertising afternoon excursions to the island of Torcello. We booked our seats and at the appointed time set off, in company with seven or eight other tourists. Romantic in its desolation, Torcello rose out of the lagoon. The boatmen drew up at the side of a mouldering jetty.

A quarter of a mile away, through the fields, stood the church. It contains some of the most beautiful mosaics in Italy. We climbed on shore—all of us with the exception of one strong-minded American couple who, on learning that the object of interest on this island was only another church, decided to remain comfortably seated in the boat till the rest of the party should return. I admired them for their firmness and their honesty. But at the same time, it seemed to me rather a melancholy thing that they should have come all this way and spent all that money, merely for the pleasure of sitting in a motor-boat tied to a rotting wharf. And then they were only at Venice. Their Italian ordeal had hardly begun. Padua, Ferrara, Ravenna, Bologna, Florence, Siena, Perugia, Assisi, and Rome, with all their innumerable churches and pictures, had still to be looked at, before—the blessed goal of Naples finally reached—they could be permitted to take the liner home again across the Atlantic. Poor slaves, I thought; and of how exacting a master!

We call such people travellers because they do not stay at home. But they are not genuine travellers, not travellers born. For they travel, not for travelling's sake, but for convention's. They set out, nourished on fables and fantastical hopes, to return, whether they avow it or not, disappointed. Their interest in the real and actual being insufficiently lively, they hanker after mythology, and the facts, however curious, beautiful, and varied, are a disillusionment. It is only the society of their fellow-tourists, with whom they conspire, every now and then, to make a little oasis of home in the foreign wilderness, coupled with the consciousness of a social duty done, that keeps them even moderately cheerful in the face of the depressing facts of travel.

Your genuine traveller, on the other hand, is so much interested in real things that he does not find it necessary to believe in fables. He is insatiably curious, he loves what is unfamiliar for the sake of its unfamiliarity, he takes pleasure in every manifestation of beauty. It would be absurd, of course, to say that he is never bored. For it is practically impossible to travel without being sometimes bored. For the tourist, a large part of almost every day is necessarily empty. Much time, to begin with, must be spent in merely getting from place to place. And when the sights have been seen, the sightseer finds himself physically weary and with nothing particular to do. At home, among one's regular occupations, one is never bored. Ennui is essentially a holiday feeling. (Is it not the chronic disease of the leisured?) It is for that very reason that your true traveller finds boredom rather agreeable than painful. It is the symbol of his liberty—his excessive freedom. He accepts his boredom, when it comes, not merely philosophically, but almost with pleasure.

For the born traveller, travelling is a besetting vice. Like other vices it is imperious, demanding its victim's time, money, energy, and the sacrifice of his comfort. It claims; and the born traveller gives, willingly, even eagerly. Most vices, it may be added parenthetically, demand considerable self-sacrifices. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that a vicious life is a life of uninterrupted pleasure. It is a life almost as wearisome and painful—if strenuously led—as Christian's in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The chief difference between Christian and the vicious man is that the first gets something out of his hardships—gets it here and now in the shape of a certain spiritual well-being, to say nothing of what he may get in that sadly problematical Jerusalem beyond the river—while the second gets nothing, except, perhaps, gout and general paralysis of the insane.

The vice of travelling, it is true, does not necessarily bring with it these two particular diseases; nor indeed any diseases at all, unless your wanderings take you as far as the tropics. No bodily diseases; for travelling is not a vice of the body (which it mortifies) but of the mind. Your traveller-for-travelling's-sake is like your desultory reader—a man addicted to mental self-indulgence.

Like all other vicious men, the reader and the traveller have a whole armoury of justifications with which to defend themselves. Reading and travelling, they say, broaden the mind, stimulate imagination, are a liberal education. And so on. These are specious arguments; but nobody is very much impressed by them. For though it may be quite true that, for certain people, desultory reading and aimless travelling are richly educative, it is not for that reason that most true readers and travellers born indulge their tastes. We read and travel, not that we may broaden and enrich our minds, but that we may pleasantly forget they exist. We love reading and travelling because they are the most delightful of all the many substitutes for thought. Sophisticated and somewhat rarefied substitutes. That is why they are not every man's diversion. The congenital reader or traveller is one of those more fastidious spirits who cannot find the distractions they require in betting, mah-jongg, drink, golf, or fox-trots.

There exist a few, a very few, who travel and, for that matter, who read, with purpose and a definite system. This is a morally admirable class. And it is the class to which, in general, the people who achieve something in the world belong. Not always, however, by any means. For, alas, one may have a high purpose and a fine character, but no talent. Some of the most self-indulgent and aimless of travellers and readers have known how to profit by their vices. Desultory reading was Dr. Johnson's besetting sin; he read every book that came under his hand and none to the end. And yet his achievement was not small. And there are frivolous travellers, like Beckford, who have gone about the world, indulging their wanton curiosity, to almost as good purpose. Virtue is its own reward; but the grapes which talent knows how to pluck—are they not a little sour?

With me, travelling is frankly a vice. The temptation to indulge in it is one which I find almost as hard to resist as the temptation to read promiscuously, omnivorously, and without purpose. From time to time, it is true, I make a desperate resolution to mend my ways. I sketch out programmes of useful, serious reading; I try to turn my rambling voyages into systematic tours through the history of art and civilization. But without much success. After a little I relapse into my old bad ways. Deplorable weakness! I try to comfort myself with the hope that even my vices may be of some profit to me.

*From* ALONG THE ROAD

# GUIDE-BOOKS

For every traveller who has any taste of his own, the only useful guide-book will be the one which he himself has written. All others are an exasperation. They mark with asterisks the works of art which he finds dull, and they pass over in silence those which he admires. They make him travel long miles to see a mound of rubbish; they go into ecstasies over mere antiquity. Their practical information is invariably out of date. They recommend bad hotels and qualify good ones as 'modest.' In a word, they are intolerable.

How often I have cursed Baron Baedeker for sending me through the dust to see some nauseating Sodoma or drearily respectable Andrea del Sarto! How angry I have been with him for starring what is old merely because it is old! And how I have hated him for his lack of discrimination! He has a way of lumping all old things of one class together and treating them as if, being made at the same period, their merit were exactly equal. For example, the stained-glass windows at Sens are treated by the guide-books as though they were just like all other stained glass of the fourteenth century, when in fact they are unique in boldness and beauty of design. Some very great artist made the series of Bible illustrations at Sens. The Baron speaks as highly of the competent craftsman's work at Chartres and Canterbury.

Similarly the monuments in the church of Brou and the choir screen at Chartres get as many stars as the tomb of Ilaria del Carretto at Lucca, or Della Robbia's bas-relief in the Opera del Duomo at Florence. They are all of them specimens of Renaissance sculpture. There is only this slight difference between them: that the Italian works happen to be consummate masterpieces, while the French are mere barbarisms—that at Brou positively and piercingly vulgar, that at Chartres well-meaning, laborious, and sincerely dull. And so totally does the Baron lack a sense of proportion that he gives as many stars to the church of Brou as to Bourges cathedral, recommending with equal enthusiasm a horrible little architectural nightmare and the grandest, the most strangely and fabulously beautiful building in Europe.

Imbecile! But a learned, and, alas, indispensable imbecile. There is no escape; one must travel in his company—at any rate on a first journey. It is only after having scrupulously done what Baedeker commands, after having discovered the Baron's lapses in taste, his artistic prejudices and antiquarian snobberies, that the tourist can compile that personal guide which is the only guide for him. If he had but possessed it on his first tour! But alas, though it is easy to take other people in by your picturesque accounts of places you have never seen, it is hard to take in yourself. The personal guide-book must be the fruit of bitter personal experience.

The only satisfactory substitute for a guide written by oneself is a guide which is copiously illustrated. To know the images of things is the next best to knowing the things themselves. Illustrations allow one to see what precisely it is that the Baron is recommending. A reproduction of those luscious Sodomas would enable one to discount the asterisks in the text. A few photographs of the tombs at Tarquinia would convince one that they were incomparably better worth looking at than the Forum. A picture of the church of Brou would excuse one from ever going near it. The best illustrated guide I know is Pampaloni's *Road Book of Tuscany*, in which the usual information is briefly summarized, the main routes from place to place described, and nothing starred that is not reproduced in a photograph.

For some tastes, I know, Pampaloni seems a little too dry. All the cackle—even as much of it as gets into Baedeker—is cut and one is left only with a telegraphic statement of facts and the photographs. Personally I have no great weakness for cackle (unless it be the cackle of genius) and so find Pampaloni perfectly satisfying. Many tourists, however, prefer a more literary guide. They like sentiment, and purple passages and states of soul in front of the Colosseum by moonlight, and all the rest. So do I—but not from the pens of the sort of people who write chatty guides. To me, even Baedeker seems at times rather too lyrical. I like my guides to be informative, unenthusiastic, and, where practical matters are concerned, up to date—which Baedeker, by the way (reluctant, I suppose, for patriotic reasons to acknowledge the fact of the late war) is not. If I want cackle I take with me a better stylist than the Baron or his gushing substitutes.

The only literary guides I enjoy are the really bad ones—so bad that their badness makes, so to speak, a full circle and becomes something sublime. Your ordinary literary guides are never bad in this superlative way. Theirs is that well-bred, efficient mediocrity for which there is nothing whatever to be said. It is only in obscure local guides that one finds the sublimely ludicrous. In any town it is always worth taking a look at the local guide. If you are lucky you will find one in which a train is called 'Stephenson's magic babe.' Not often, I admit (for it is not every day that a genius is born who can hit on such felicities); but often enough to make the search worth while. I myself have found some notable passages in local Italian guides. This description of a sixth-rate 'Venus rising from the Sea' is juicy: '*Venere, abbigliata di una calda nudità, sorge dalle onde. . . . È una seducente figura di donna, palpitante, voluttuosa. Sembra che sotto l'epidermide pulsino le vene frementi e scorre tepido il sangue. L'occhio languido pare inviti a una dolce tregenda.*' D'Annunzio himself could hardly have done better. But the finest specimen of the guide-book style I have ever met with was in France. It is a description of Dijon. '*Comme une jolie femme dont une maturité savoureuse arrondit les formes plus pleines, la capitale de la Bourgogne a fait, en grandissant, éclater la tunique étroite de ses vieilles murailles; elle a revêtu la robe plus moderne et plus confortable des larges boulevards, des places spacieuses, des faubourgs s'égrenant dans les jardins; mais elle a gardé le corps aux lignes pures, aux charmants détails que des siècles épris d'art avaient amoureusement orné.*' Hats off to France! It is with alacrity, on this occasion, that I accede to Lord Rothermere's request.

Old guide-books, so out of date as to be historical documents, make excellent travelling-companions. An early Murray is a treasure. Indeed, any volume of European travels, however dull, is interesting, provided that it be written before the age of railways and Ruskin. It is delightful to read on the spot the impressions and opinions of tourists who visited a hundred years ago, in the vehicles and with the aesthetic prejudices of the period, the places which you are visiting now. The voyage ceases to be a mere tour through space; you travel through time and thought as well. They are morally wholesome reading too, these old books of travel; for they make one realize the entirely accidental character of all our tastes and our fundamental intellectual beliefs. It seems to us axiomatic, for example, that Giotto was a great artist; and yet Goethe, when he went to Assisi, did not even take the trouble to look at the frescoes in the church. For him, the only thing worth seeing at Assisi was the portico of the Roman temple. We for our part cannot get much pleasure out of Guercino; and yet Stendhal was ravished by him. We find Canova 'amusing' and sometimes, as in the statue of Pauline Borghese, really charming in a soft, voluptuous way (the very cushion on which she reclines bulges out voluptuously; one is reminded of those positively indecent clouds over which Correggio's angels look down at one from the dome at Parma). But we cannot quite agree with Byron when he says 'Such as the Great of yore, Canova is to-day.' And yet after all, Goethe, Stendal, and Byron were no fools. Given their upbringing, they could not have thought differently. We would have thought just as they did, if we had lived a hundred years ago. Our altered standards of appreciation and generally greater tolerance are chiefly the result of increased acquaintance with the art of every nation and period—an acquaintance due in its turn chiefly to photography. The vastly greater part of the world's art has been non-realistic; we know the world's art as our ancestors never did; it is therefore only to be expected that we should be much more favourably disposed to non-realistic art, much less impressed by realism as such than men who were brought up almost exclusively in the knowledge of Greek, Roman, and modern realism. These old books teach us not to be too arrogant and cocksure in our judgments. We too shall look foolish in our turn.

There are so many of these old books and they are all so characteristic of their epoch, that one can select them almost at random from the shelves of a well-stocked library, certain that whatever one lights on will be entertaining and instructive reading. Speaking from my own personal experience, I have always found Stendhal particularly agreeable as an Italian companion. The *Promenades dans Rome* have accompanied me on many of my walks in that city and never failed to please. Very enjoyable too, when one is in Rome, is the too much neglected Veuillot. I will not pretend that Veuillot is a great writer. Indeed, much of his charm and apparent originality consists in the merely accidental fact that his prejudices were unlike those which most travellers bring with them to Italy. We are so much accustomed to hearing that the temporal power was an unmixed evil and that the priests were the cause of Italy's degradation, that a man who tells us the contrary seems startlingly original. After the denunciations of so many Protestants and freethinkers we read his book, if it be tolerably well written (and Veuillot was a first-rate journalist), with a special pleasure. (It is, in the same way, the unusualness of the point of view from which it is written that makes *Les Paysans* of Balzac seem an even more remarkable book than it really is. We are used to reading novels in which the humble virtues of the peasant are exalted, his hard lot deplored, and the tyranny of the landlord denounced. Balzac starts with the assumption that the peasant is an unmitigated ruffian and demands our sympathy for the unhappy landlord, who is represented as suffering incessant and unmerited persecution at the hands of the peasants. Balzac's reading of social history may not be correct; but it is at least refreshingly unlike that of most novelists who deal with similar themes.) *Les Parfums de Rome* shares with *Les Paysans* the merit of being written from an unexpected point of view. Veuillot tours the papal states determined to see in them the earthly paradise. And he succeeds. His Holiness has only happy subjects. Outside this blessed fold prowl the wild beasts, Cavour, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and the rest; it is the duty of every right-thinking man to see that they do not break in. This is his theme and he finds in everything he sees excuses for recurring to it. *Les Parfums de Rome* is written with a refreshing intemperance of language. Veuillot, like Zimmi, was:

> So over violent or over civil,
> That every man with him was God or Devil.

Moreover he was logical and had the courage of his convictions. How admirable, for example, is his denunciation of all pagan art on the ground that it is not Christian! While all the rest of the world grovel before the Greeks and Romans, Veuillot, the logical ultramontanist, condemns them and all their works, on principle, contemptuously. It is delightful.

Of the other old travelling-companions who have given me pleasure by the way I can only mention a few. There is that mine of information, the Président des Brosses. No one is a better companion on the Italian tour. Our own Young is nearly as good in France. Miss Berry's journals of travel are full of interest. There are good things to be got from Lady Mary Montagu. Beckford is the perfect dilettante. But plain Bible-selling Borrow has the credit of being the first man to appreciate El Greco.

If pictures are not your chief interest, there is the admirable Dr. Burney, whose *Musical Tours* are as instructive as they are delightful. His Italian volumes are valuable, among many other reasons, because they make one realize what had happened, during the eighteenth century, to all the prodigious talent which had gone, in the past, to painting pictures, carving statues, and building churches. It had all gone into music. The very street players were accomplished contrapuntists; the peasants sang divinely (you should hear the way they sing now!), every church had a good choir which was perpetually producing new masses, motets, and oratorios; there was hardly a lady or gentleman who was not a first-rate amateur performer; there were innumerable concerts. Dr. Burney found it a musician's paradise. And what has happened to Italian genius nowadays? Does it still exist? Or is it dead?

It still exists, I think; but it has been deflected out of music, as it was deflected out of the visual arts, into politics and, later, into business and engineering. The first two-thirds of the nineteenth century were sufficiently occupied in the achievement of freedom and unity. The sixty years since then have been devoted to the exploitation of the country's resources; and such energy as has been left over from that task has gone into politics. One day, when they have finished putting modern comfort into the old house, have turned out the obstreperous servants and installed a quiet, honest housekeeper—one day, perhaps, the Italians will allow their energy and their talent to flow back into the old channels. Let us hope they will.

*From* ALONG THE ROAD

## BETWEEN PESHAWAR AND LAHORE

At Peshawar we were seized with one of our periodical financial panics. Money, in this country, slips rapidly between the fingers, particularly between the fingers of the tourist. Great wads of it have to be handed out every time one gets into the train; for fares are high and distances enormous. No place in India seems to be less than three hundred miles from any other place; the longer journeys have to be measured in thousands. Financial panics are justifiable. We decided to travel second class as far as Lahore.

For the first hour or so we were alone in our compartment. We congratulated ourselves on having secured all the comfort and privacy of first-class travelling at exactly half the price. In future, we decided, we would always travel second. But Nature abhors a vacuum, and our compartment was evidently the object of her special abhorrence. When the train stopped at Campbellpur, we were invaded. In the twinkling of an eye our luxurious emptiness was filled to overflowing with luggage and humanity. And what queer specimens of humanity! The leader of the party which now entered the compartment was a middle-aged man wearing a yellow robe and, on his head, a kind of quilted bonnet with hanging ear-flaps. He was profusely garlanded with yellow chrysanthemums, and had been followed on to the platform by a large crowd of flower-bearing admirers and devotees. Our ignorance of the language did not permit us to discover who this exalted person might be. But he was evidently some kind of high priest, some Hindu pope of considerable holiness, to judge by the respect which was paid him by his numerous retinue and his admirers. His passage along the line must have been well advertised; for at every station our compartment was invaded by a swarm of devotees who came to kiss the great man's feet and to crave a blessing, which in most cases he seemed too lazy to give. Even the guards and ticket-collectors and stationmasters came in to pay their respects. The enthusiasm of one ticket-collector was so great that he travelled about thirty miles in our already packed compartment, simply in order to be near the holy man. He, meanwhile, passed the time by counting his money, which was contained in a large brass-bound box, by loudly eating, and, later, dozing. Even at the stations he did not take the trouble to rouse himself, but reclined with closed eyes along his seat, and passively permitted the faithful to kiss his feet. When one is as holy as he evidently was, it is unnecessary to keep up appearances, behave decently, or do anything for one's followers. Office and hereditary honour claim the respect of a believing people quite as much as personal merit.

Judging by appearances, which are often deceptive, I should say that this particular holy man had no personal merit, but a very great office. His face, which had the elements of a fine and powerful face, seemed to have disintegrated and run to fat under the influence of a hoggish self-indulgence. To look at, he was certainly one of the most repulsive human specimens I have ever seen. But of course he may in reality have been a saint and an ascetic, a preacher and a practiser of the moral doctrines formulated in the Gita, or even one of those pure-souled Oriental mystics who, we are told, are to leaven the materialism of our Western civilization. He may have been, but I doubt it. All that we could be certain of was that he looked unpleasant, and was undoubtedly dirty; also that he and his admirers exhaled the sour stink of garments long unwashed.

Tolstoy objected to too much cleanliness on the ground that to be too clean is a badge of class. It is only the rich who can afford the time and money to wash their bodies and shift their linen frequently. The labourer who sweats for his living, and whose house contains no bathroom, whose wardrobes no superfluous shirts, must stink. It is inevitable, and it is also right and proper, that he should. Work is prayer. Work is also stink. Therefore stink is prayer. So, more or less, argues Tolstoy, who goes on to condemn the rich for not stinking, and for bringing up their children to have a prejudice against all stinks however natural and even creditable. The non-stinker's prejudice against stink is largely a class prejudice, and therefore to be condemned.

Tolstoy is quite right, of course. We who were brought up on open windows, clean shirts, hot baths, and sanitary plumbing, find it hard to tolerate twice-breathed air and all the odours which crowded humanity naturally exhales. Our physical education has been such that the majority of our fellow-beings, particularly those less fortunately circumstanced than ourselves, seem to us slightly or even extremely disgusting. A man may have strong humanitarian and democratic principles; but if he happens to have been brought up as a bath-taking, shirt-changing lover of fresh air, he will have to overcome certain physical repugnances before he can bring himself to put those principles into practice to the extent, at any rate, of associating freely with men and women whose habits are different from his own. It is a deplorable fact; but there it is. Tolstoy's remedy is that we should all stink together. Other reformers desire to make it economically possible for every man to have as many hot baths and to change his shirt as often as do the privileged non-stinkers at the present day. Personally, I prefer the second alternative.

Meanwhile, the crowd in our compartment increased. The day, as it advanced, grew hotter. And suddenly the holy man woke up and began to hoick and spit all over the compartment. By the time we reached Rawal Pindi we had decided that the twenty-two rupees we should economize by remaining seven hours longer among our second-class brothers were not enough. We had our luggage transferred into a first-class carriage and paid the difference. The only other occupant of the compartment was an English official of the Kashmir State, bound for his winter headquarters at Jammu. He was a dim little man; but at any rate his linen was clean, and he was not in the least holy. Nobody came in to kiss his feet.

For the rest of the journey I ruminated my anti-clericalism. Indian friends have assured me that the power of the priests is less than it was, and goes on rapidly waning. I hope they are right and that the process may be further accelerated. And not in India alone. There is still, for my taste, too much kissing of amethyst rings as well as of slippered feet. There are still too many black coats in the West, too many orange ones in the East. *Écrasez l'infâme.* My travelling companion had made me, for the moment, a thorough-going Voltairian.

It is a simple creed, Voltairianism. In its simplicity lies its charm, lies the secret of its success—and also of its fallaciousness. For, in our muddled human universe, nothing so simple can possibly be true, can conceivably 'work.'

If the *infâme* were squashed, if insecticide were scattered on all the clerical beetles, whether black or yellow, if pure rationalism became the universal faith, all would automatically be well. So runs the simple creed of the anti-clericals. It is too simple, and the assumptions on which it is based are too sweeping. For, to begin with, is the *infâme* always infamous, and are the beetles invariably harmful? Obviously not. Nor can it be said that the behaviour-value of pure rationalism (whatever the truth-value of its underlying assumptions) is necessarily superior to the behaviour-value of irrational beliefs which may be and, in general, almost certainly are untrue. And further, the vast majority of human beings are not interested in reason or satisfied with what it teaches. Nor is reason itself the most satisfactory instrument for the understanding of life. Such are a few of the complications which render so simple a formula as the anti-clerical's inapplicable to our real and chaotic existence.

Man's progress has been contingent on his capacity to organize societies. It is only when protected by surrounding society from aggression, when freed by the organized labour of society from the necessity of hunting or digging for his food, it is only, that is to say, when society has tempered and to a great extent abolished the struggle for personal existence, that the man of talent can exercise his capacities to the full. And it is only by a well-organized society that the results of his labours can be preserved for the enrichment of succeeding generations. Any force that tends to the strengthening of society is, therefore, of the highest biological importance. Religion is obviously such a force. All religions have been unanimous in encouraging within limits that have tended to grow wider and ever wider, the social, altruistic, humanitarian proclivities of man, and in condemning his anti-social, self-assertive tendencies. Those who like to speak anthropomorphically would be justified in saying that religion is a device employed by the Life Force for the promotion of its evolutionary designs. But they would be justified in adding that religion is also a device employed by the Devil for the dissemination of idiocy, intolerance, and servile abjection. My fellow-passenger from Campbellpur did something, no doubt, to encourage brotherly love, forbearance, and mutual helpfulness among his flock. But he also did his best to deepen their congenital stupidity and prevent it from being tempered by the acquirement of correct and useful knowledge, he did his best to terrify them with imaginary fears into servility and to flatter them with groundless hopes into passive contentment with a life unworthy of human beings. What he did in the name of the evolutionary Life Force, he undid in the name of the Devil. I cherish a pious hope that he did just a trifle more than he undid, and that the Devil remained, as the result of his ministry, by ever so little the loser.

*From* JESTING PILATE (1926).

# AGRA

I AM always a little uncomfortable when I find myself unable to admire something which all the rest of the world admires—or at least is reputed to admire. Am I, or is the world the fool? Is it the world's taste that is bad, or is mine? I am reluctant to condemn myself, and almost equally reluctant to believe that I alone am right. Thus, when all men (and not the professors of English literature only, but Milton too, and Wordsworth and Keats) assure me that Spenser is a great poet, I wonder what to do. For to me Spenser seems only a virtuoso, a man with the conjurer's trick of extracting perfectly rhymed stanzas by the hundred, out of an empty mind. Perhaps I am unduly prejudiced in favour of sense; but it has always seemed to me that poets should have something to say. Spenser's is the art of saying nothing, at length, in rhyme and rumbling metre. The world admires; but I cannot. I wish I could.

Here at Agra I find myself afflicted by the same sense of discomfort. The Taj Mahal is one of the seven wonders. My guide assures me that it is 'perhaps the most beautiful building in the world.' Following its advice, we drove out to have our first look at the marvel by the light of the setting sun. Nature did its best for the Taj. The west was duly red, and orange, and yellow, and, finally, emerald green, grading into pale and flawless blue towards the zenith. Two evening stars, Venus and Mercury, pursued the sunken sun. The sacred Jumna was like a sheet of silver between its banks. Beyond it the plains stretched greyly away into the vapours of distance. The gardens were rich with turf, with cypresses, palms, and peepul trees, with long shadows and rosy lights, with the noise of grasshoppers, the calling of enormous owls, the indefatigable hammering of a coppersmith bird. Nature, I repeat, did its best. But though it adorned, it could not improve the works of man. The Taj, even at sunset, even reverberated upside down from tanks and river, even in conjunction with melancholy cypresses—the Taj was a disappointment.

My failure to appreciate the Taj is due, I think, to the fact that, while I am very fond of architecture and the decorative arts, I am very little interested in the expensive or the picturesque, as such and by themselves. Now the great qualities of the Taj are precisely those of expensiveness and picturesqueness. Milk-white amongst its dark cypresses, flawlessly mirrored, it is positively the *Toteninsel* of Arnold Boecklin come true. And its costliness is fabulous. Its marbles are carved and filigreed, are patterned with an inlay of precious stones. The smallest rose or poppy on the royal tombs is an affair of twenty or thirty cornelians, onyxes, agates, chrysolites. The New Jerusalem was not more rich in variety of precious pebbles. If the Viceroy took it into his head to build another Taj identical with the first, he would have to spend as much as a fifteenth, or even perhaps a twelfth or tenth of what he spends each year on the Indian Army. Imagination staggers. . . .

This inordinate costliness is what most people seem to like about the Taj. And if they are disappointed with it (I have met several who were, and always for the same reason) it is because the building is not quite so expensive as they thought it was. Clambering among the roofs they have found evidence to show that the marble is only a veneer over cheaper masonry, not solid. It is a swindle! Meanwhile the guides and guardians are earning their money by insisting on the Taj's costliness. 'All marble,' they say, 'all precious stones.' They want you to touch as well as look, to realize the richness not with eyes alone, but intimately with the fingers. I have seen guides in Europe doing the same. Expensiveness is everywhere admired. The average tourist is moved to greater raptures by St. Peter's than by his own St. Paul's. The interior of the Roman basilica is all of marble. St. Paul's is only Portland stone. The relative architectural merits of the two churches are not for a moment considered.

Architecturally, the worst features of the Taj are its minarets. These four thin tapering towers standing at the four corners of the platform on which the Taj is built are among the ugliest structures ever erected by human hands. True, the architect might offer a number of excuses for his minarets. He would begin by pointing out that, the dimensions of the main building and the platform being what they are, it was impossible to give the four subsidiary structures more than a certain limited mass between them, a mass small in proportion to the Taj itself. Architecturally, no doubt, it would have been best to put this definitely limited mass into four low buildings of comparatively large plan. But, unfortunately, the exigencies of religion made it necessary to put the available mass into minarets. This mass being small, it was necessary that the minarets should be very thin for their height.

These excuses, so far as they go, are perfectly valid. By the laws of religion there had to be minarets, and by the laws of proportion the minarets had to be unconscionably slender. But there was no need to make them feebly taper, there was no need to pick out the component blocks of which they are built with edgings of black, and above all there was no need to surround the shaft of the minarets with thick clumsy balconies placed, moreover, at just the wrong intervals of distance from one another and from the ground.

The Taj itself is marred by none of the faults which characterize the minarets. But its elegance is at the best of a very dry and negative kind. Its 'classicism' is the product not of intellectual restraint imposed on an exuberant fancy, but of an actual deficiency of fancy, a poverty of imagination. One is struck at once by the lack of variety in the architectural forms of which it is composed. There are, for all practical purposes, only two contrasting formal elements in the whole design—the onion dome, reproduced in two dimensions in the pointed arches of the recessed bays, and the flat wall surface with its sharply rectangular limits. When the Taj is compared with more or less contemporary European buildings in the neo-classic style of the High Renaissance and Baroque periods, this poverty in the formal elements composing it becomes very apparent. Consider, for example, St. Paul's. The number of component forms in its design is very large. We have the hemispherical dome, the great colonnaded cylinder of the drum, the flat side-walls relieved by square-faced pilasters and rounded niches; we have, at one end, the curved surfaces of the apse and, at the other, the West Front with its porch—a design of detached cylinders (the pillars), seen against a flat wall, and supporting yet another formal element, the triangular pediment. If it is argued that St. Paul's is a very much larger building than the Taj, and that we should therefore expect the number of contrasting elements in its design to be greater, we may take a smaller specimen of late Renaissance architecture as our standard of comparison. I suggest Palladio's Rotonda at Vicenza, a building somewhat smaller than the Taj and, like it, of regular design and doomed. Analysing the Rotonda we shall find that it consists of a far larger number of formal elements than does the Taj, and that its elegance, in consequence, is much richer, much more subtle and various than the poor, dry, negative elegance characteristic of the Indian building.

But it is not necessary to go as far as Europe to find specimens of a more varied and imaginative elegance than that of the Taj. The Hindu architects produced buildings incomparably more rich and interesting as works of art. I have not visited Southern India, where, it is said, the finest specimens of Hindu architecture are to be found. But I have seen enough of the art in Rajputana to convince me of its enormous superiority to any work of the Mohammedans. The temples at Chitor, for example, are specimens of true classicism. They are the products of a prodigious, an almost excessive, fancy, held in check and directed by the most judicious intelligence. Their elegance—and in their way they are just as elegant as the Taj—is an opulent and subtle elegance, full of unexpected felicities. The formal elements of their design are numerous and pleasingly contrasted, and the detail — mouldings and ornamental sculpture — is always, however copious, subordinated to the architectural scheme and of the highest decorative quality.

In this last respect Hindu ornament is decidedly superior to that employed by the later Moguls. The *pietra dura* work at the Taj and the Shahdara tombs at Lahore is marvellously neat in execution and of extravagant costliness. These qualities are admirable enough in their way; but they have nothing to do with the decorative value of the work considered as art. As works of art, the *pietra dura* decorations of the Taj are poor and uninteresting. Arabesques of far finer design are to be seen in the carved and painted ornamentation of Rajput palaces and temples. As for the bas-reliefs of flowers which adorn the gateway of the Taj—these are frankly bad. The design of them vacillates uncertainly between realism and conventionalism. They are neither life-like portraits of flowers nor good pieces of free floral decoration. How any one who has ever seen a fine specimen of decorative flower-painting or flower-carving, whether Hindu or European, can possibly admire these feebly laborious reliefs passes my understanding. Indeed, it seems to me that any one who professes an ardent admiration for the Taj must look at it without having any standards of excellence in his mind—as though the thing existed uniquely, in a vacuum. But the Taj exists in a world well sprinkled with masterpieces of architecture and decoration. Compare it with these, and the Imperial Mausoleum at once takes its proper place in the hierarchy of art—well down below the best. But it is made of marble. Marble, I perceive, covers a multitude of sins.

*From* JESTING PILATE

## BENARES

### *14th January* 1926

It was said that the eclipse of the sun would be visible from Benares. But it needed more than smoked glass to see it; the eye of faith was also indispensable. That, alas, we did not possess. Partial to the point of being non-existent, the eclipse remained, for us at least, unseen. Not that we minded. For it was not to look at the moon's silhouette that we had rowed out that morning on the Ganges; it was to look at the Hindus looking at it. The spectacle was vastly more extraordinary.

There were, at the lowest estimate, a million of them on the bathing ghats that morning. A million. All the previous night and day they had been streaming into the town. We had met them on every road, trudging with bare feet through the dust, an endless and silent procession. In bundles balanced on their heads they carried provisions and cooking utensils and dried dung for fuel, with the new clothes which it is incumbent on pious Hindus to put on after their bath in honour of the eclipsed sun. Many had come far. The old men leaned wearily on their bamboo staves. Their children astride of their hips, the burdens on their heads automatically balanced, the women walked in a trance of fatigue. Here and there we would see a little troop that had sat down to rest—casually, as is the way of Indians, in the dust of the road and almost under the wheels of the passing vehicles.

And now the day and the hour had come. The serpent was about to swallow the sun. (It was about to swallow him in Sumatra, at any rate. At Benares it would do no more than nibble imperceptibly at the edge of his disk. The serpent, should one say, was going to try to swallow the sun.) A million of men and women had come together at Benares to assist the Light of Heaven against his enemy.

The ghats go down in furlong-wide flights of steps to the river, which lies like a long arena at the foot of enormous tiers of seats. The tiers were thronged to-day. Floating on the Ganges, we looked up at acres upon sloping acres of humanity.

On the smaller and comparatively unsacred ghats the crowd was a little less densely packed than on the holiest steps. It was at one of these less crowded ghats that we witnessed the embarkation on the sacred river of a princess. Canopied and curtained with glittering cloth of gold, a palanquin came staggering down through the crowd on the shoulders of six red-liveried attendants. A great barge, like a Noah's ark, its windows hung with scarlet curtains, floated at the water's edge. The major-domo shouted and shoved and hit out with his rod of office; a way was somehow cleared. Slowly and with frightful lurchings, the palanquin descended. It was set down, and in the twinkling of an eye a little passage-way of canvas had been erected between the litter and the door of the barge. There was a heaving of the cloth of gold, a flapping of the canvas; the lady—the ladies, for there were several of them in the litter—had entered the barge unobserved of any vulgar eye. Which did not prevent them, a few minutes later when the barge had been pushed out into mid-stream, from lifting the scarlet curtains and peering out with naked faces and unabashed curiosity at the passing boats and our inquisitive camera. Poor princesses! They could not bathe with their plebeian and unimprisoned sisters in the open Ganges. Their dip was to be in the barge's bilge-water. The sacred stream is filthy enough under the sky. What must it be like after stagnating in darkness at the bottom of an ancient barge?

We rowed on towards the burning ghats. Stretched out on their neat little oblong pyres, two or three corpses were slowly smouldering. They lay on burning faggots, they were covered by them. Gruesomely and grotesquely, their bare feet projected, like the feet of those who sleep uneasily on a bed too short and under exiguous blankets.

A little farther on we saw a row of holy men, sitting like cormorants on a narrow ledge of masonry just above the water. Cross-legged, their hands dropped limply, palm upwards, on the ground beside them, they contemplated the brown and sweating tips of their noses. It was the Lord Krishna himself who, in the *Bhagavad Gita,* prescribed that mystic squint. Lord Krishna, it is evident, knew all that there is to be known about the art of self-hypnotism. His simple method has never been improved on; it puts the mystical ecstasy *à la portée de tous.* The noise of an assembled million filled the air; but no sound could break the meditative sleep of the nose-gazers.

At a given moment the eye of faith must have observed the nibblings of the demoniacal serpent. For suddenly and simultaneously all those on the lowest steps of the ghats threw themselves into the water and began to wash and gargle, to say their prayers and blow their noses, to spit and drink. A numerous band of police abbreviated their devotions and their bath in the interest of the crowds behind. The front of the waiting queue was a thousand yards wide; but a million people were waiting. The bathing must have gone on uninterruptedly the whole day.

Time passed. The serpent went on nibbling imperceptibly at the sun. The Hindus counted their beads and prayed, made ritual gestures, ducked under the sacred slime, drank, and were moved on by the police to make room for another instalment of the patient million. We rowed up and down, taking snapshots. West is West.

In spite of the serpent, the sun was uncommonly hot on our backs. After a couple of hours on the river, we decided that we had had enough, and landed. The narrow lanes that lead from the ghats to the open streets in the centre of the town were lined with beggars, more or less holy. They sat on the ground with their begging bowls before them; the charitable, as they passed, would throw a few grains of rice into each of the bowls. By the end of the day the beggars might, with luck, have accumulated a square meal. We pushed our way slowly through the thronged alleys. From an archway in front of us emerged a sacred bull. The nearest beggar was dozing at his post—those who eat little sleep much. The bull lowered its muzzle to the sleeping man's bowl, made a scouring movement with its black tongue, and a morning's charity had gone. The beggar still dozed. Thoughtfully chewing, the Hindu totem turned back the way it had come and disappeared.

Being stupid and having no imagination, animals often behave far more sensibly than men. Efficiently and by instinct they do the right, appropriate thing at the right moment—eat when they are hungry, look for water when they feel thirst, make love in the mating season, rest or play when they have leisure. Men are intelligent and imaginative; they look backwards and ahead; they invent ingenious explanation for observed phenomena; they devise elaborate and roundabout means for the achievement of remote ends. Their intelligence, which has made them the masters of the world, often causes them to act like imbeciles. No animal, for example, is clever and imaginative enough to suppose that an eclipse is the work of a serpent devouring the sun. That is the sort of explanation that could occur only to the human mind. And only a human being would dream of making ritual gestures in the hope of influencing, for his own benefit, the outside world. While the animal, obedient to its instinct, goes quietly about its business, man, being endowed with reason and imagination, wastes half his time and energy in doing things that are completely idiotic. In time, it is true, experience teaches him that magic formulas and ceremonial gestures do not give him what he wants. But until experience has taught him—and he takes a surprisingly long time to learn—man's behaviour is in many respects far sillier than that of the animal.

So I reflected, as I watched the sacred bull lick up the rice from the dozing beggar's bowl. While a million people undertake long journeys, suffer fatigue, hunger, and discomfort in order to perform, in a certain stretch of very dirty water, certain antics for the benefit of a fixed star ninety million miles away, the bull goes about looking for food and fills its belly with whatever it can find. In this case, it is obvious, the bull's brainlessness causes it to act much more rationally than its masters.

To save the sun (which might, one feels, very safely be left to look after itself) a million of Hindus will assemble on the banks of the Ganges. How many, I wonder, would assemble to save India? An immense energy which, if it could be turned into political channels, might liberate and transform the country, is wasted in the name of imbecile superstitions. Religion is a luxury which India, in its present condition, cannot possibly afford. India will never be free until the Hindus and the Moslems are as tepidly enthusiastic about their religion as we are about the Church of England. If I were an Indian millionaire, I would leave all my money for the endowment of an Atheist Mission.

*From* JESTING PILATE

# JAPAN

It was grey when we landed at Kobe, and the air was cold and smelt of soot. There was deep mud in the streets. A little while after we had stepped on shore it began to rain. We might have been landing at Leith in the height of a Scotch November.

Lifted above the mud on stilt-like clogs, little men paddled about the streets; they were dressed in Inverness capes of grey or brown silk and cheap felt hats. Women in dressing-gowns, with high-piled, elaborately architectured hair, like the coiffure of an old-fashioned barmaid, dyed black, toddled beside them, leading or carrying on their backs gaudily dressed children, whose round expressionless button-faces were like the faces of little Eskimos. It seemed, certainly, an odd sort of population to be inhabiting Leith. Reluctantly we had to admit that we were indeed in the Extreme Orient, and the flowers in the shops had to be accepted as a sufficient proof that this funereal wintry day was really a day in the month of Cherry Blossom.

We got into the train and for two hours rolled through a grey country, bounded by dim hills and bristling with factory chimneys. Every few miles the sparse chimneys would thicken to a grove, with, round their feet—like toadstools about the roots of trees—a sprawling collection of wooden shanties: a Japanese town. The largest of these fungus beds was Osaka.

It was late in the afternoon when we arrived at Kyoto, the ancient capital, 'the Art City of Japan' (we had been well primed before starting with touristic literature). Declining the proffered taxi, we climbed into rickshaws, the better to observe the town. It was only feebly drizzling. Dressed like Anglo-Saxon messengers in blue jerkins and tights, our coolies drew us splashing through the mud. Kyoto is like one of those mining camps one sees on the movies, but two or three hundred times as large as any possible Wild Western original. Little wooden shack succeeds little wooden shack interminably, mile after mile; and the recession of the straight untidy roads is emphasized by the long lines of posts, the sagging electric wires that flank each street, like the trees of an avenue. All the cowboys in the world could live in Kyoto, all the Forty-Niners. Street leads into identical street, district merges indistinguishably into district. In this dreary ocean of log-cabins almost the only White Houses are the hotels.

For a few hours that evening it ceased to rain. We took the opportunity to explore the city on foot. The streets were well lighted, the shops—and almost every one of the hundred thousand shacks in Kyoto is a shop—were mostly open. We walked through the city, seeing the commercial life steadily and seeing it almost whole. It was like walking, ankle-deep in mud, through an enormous Woolworth's bazaar. Such a collection of the cheap and shoddy, of the quasi-genuine and the imitation-solid, of the vulgar and the tawdry, I have never seen. And the strange thing was that, in Kyoto, even the real, the sound, the thoroughly pukka had an air of flimsiness and falsity. Looking at the most expensive kimonos with a lifetime of wear woven into their thick silk, you would swear that they were things of wood-pulp. The ivories resemble celluloid; the hand embroideries have the appearance of the machine-made article. The genuine antiques—the ones you see in the museums, for there are none elsewhere—look as though they had been fabricated yesterday. This is due partly to the fact that in recent years we have become so familiar with the conventional forms of Japanese art turned out on machines by the million for the penny bazaar market, that we cannot associate them with anything but cheapness and falsity; partly too, I think, to a certain intrinsic feebleness and vulgarity in the forms themselves. That sobriety, that strength, that faultless refinement which are the characteristics of Chinese art, and which give to the cheapest piece of Chinese earthenware, the most ordinary embroidery or carving or lettering, a magistral air of artistic importance and significance, are totally lacking, so it seems to me, in the art of Japan. The designs of Japanese fabrics are garish and pretentious; the sculpture even of the best periods is baroque; the pottery which in China is so irreproachable both in hue and shape is always in Japan just not 'right.' It is as though there were some inherent vice in Japanese art which made the genuine seem false and the expensive shoddy.

Factories, smoke, innumerable Woolworths, mud—were these Japan? We were assured they were not. The 'real' Japan (all countries have a 'real' self, which no stranger can ever hope to see) was something different, was somewhere else. Looking at the celebrated Cherry Dances in Kyoto, we were almost ready to believe it. The costumes, it is true, were extraordinarily vulgar and garish. The scenery in Western style—the Western style of the pre-War provincial pantomime—was deplorable. Any self-respecting producer of revues in London or New York could have staged a far more adequate Old Japan. But he could not have got the dancing. That was an enchantment. A chorus of thirty or forty geishas, drilled to a pitch of almost Prussian efficiency, their farded faces impassive as white masks, performed a ballet that was the formalization of the gestures of courtesy, that was polite conversation made more gracefully polite, that was the apotheosis of good manners at the tea-table. And hardly less lovely were the movements of the orchestra. In Europe one pays to listen to music; in Japan one pays to see it played. When European performers make their appearance upon the platform one generally wants to shut one's eyes; in a Japanese concert-room, on the other hand, one desires to keep one's eyes wide open and to close one's ears. Not that the music is unpleasant. What I heard at Kyoto might have been the remote and geological ancestor of Russian music. It stood in relation to Rimsky Korsakoff as pithecanthropus stands to man; it was a kind of *ur*-Stravinsky, a fossil and primitive form of the genus Moussorgsky. Not unpleasing, I repeat, but after a while a little boring. The guitars, on which twenty geishas played with plectrums that looked like ivory combs, were singularly poor in tone. And the tambourines, the cymbals, and the drums, which were being played by twenty of their sisters on the opposite side of the hall, beat out only the simplest and most obvious rhythms. No, the orchestra was not much to listen to. But what a ravishment to behold! They were as well drilled as the ballerinas. The twenty guitar players sat in identically the same position, and when they combed the strings of their instruments their hands performed the same movements simultaneously, as though they were the synchronously moving parts of one machine. Similar machines actuated the eight hour-glass-shaped tambourines, the eight small kettle-drums, the two sets of cymbals, the two little gongs. Most exquisite of all were the drummers. They knelt in front of their instruments as though before a row of little gods. Each held a pair of enormous white drumsticks, so thick that the tiny hands could hardly grasp them. With these, in unison, they tapped the little gods before whom they knelt; and the little drum gods answered them, boom boom—a response, it must be admitted, rather more clear and comprehensible than that which deities are accustomed to vouchsafe to their worshippers. But then the ritual of these Japanese adorers was so beautiful that it could hardly fail to be magically compelling. Their arms, prolonged by the enormous white drumsticks, were held out before them almost at full stretch. And when they beat, they beat from the shoulder, lifting and letting fall the whole arm. But 'letting fall' is not the right expression; it connotes a loose and undeliberate movement, and the drummers did nothing undeliberately. On the contrary, each stroke was applied with a perfectly controlled precision. Tap, tap, tap-a-tap, tap; they touched the drum face as though they were fitting into position, one by one, the tesserae, now large, now small, of an elaborate mosaic.

Perhaps these dancers, these exquisitely disciplined musicians, were the 'real' Japan. Perhaps, too, it existed in the country which we saw on our way to Yokohama. The sun had come out at last. The sky was palely blue and alive with clouds that trailed great indigo shadows across the earth beneath them. It was an almost Italian country of abrupt hills and lakes and mountain-encircled plains. A paler variety of our mustard was blooming in the fields. Great expanses of primrose yellow covered the plains to the edge of the blue lakes, to the feet of the dim blue mountains. The mustard seemed to me far more impressively beautiful than the cherry blossom. The near hills were brown, steep, almost bare, their crests fringed with a growth, not of the Tuscan umbrella pine, but of the trees which figure so largely in the native woodcuts, the ragged, yet strangely elegant, pine-trees, whose silhouette against the sky is like a Chinese ideograph. To one familiar with the Celestial symbols, the whole landscape, I liked to fancy, would be an open book. Wisdom and poetry would sprout for him on every hill. Or perhaps, who knows? the trees might just be saying, 'Foreign Devil, Foreign Devil,' and repeating it monotonously, mile after mile. The second, I am afraid, is the more probable hypothesis.

We rolled on, through miles of innumerable little rice-fields laboriously embanked to hold the water with which they were being flooded; among sloping plantations of tea shrubs, round and shinily green, like bushes of clipped box; through luminous plains of mustard and young green corn; past villages of thatched houses beautifully set among the trees. And every twenty miles or so, we would catch glimpses of a thing which seemed, at first, only a white cloud among the clouds of the horizon, a pale small ghost, but a ghost which, at every glimpse, became more definite, clearer, larger, until—hours after we had had our earliest sight of it—it stood shining high above us, a huge white cone, girdled with clouds, a miracle of regular and geometrical form among the chaotic hills which it overtopped, the sacred mountain of Japan, Fujiyama. We saw it first at noon, a tiny cloud melting into the clouds; and at sunset we were looking back on it, an enormous mass rising clear of all vapours, naked and perfect, into the coloured sky. Was this the 'real' Japan? I suppose so.

But a little later, at Yokohama, we were plunged again, head over ears, into the unreal. If Kyoto looks like a mining camp, Yokohama after the earthquake looks like a mining camp that has not yet been finished. There are dust-heaps among the shanties, there are holes in the roadways, there are unbuilt bridges. But in a little while when the mass is all cleared up and the damage repaired, it will be just like Kyoto—miles of dreary ill-kept roads, hundreds of thousands of ugly little wooden shanties, and every shanty a shop and every shop a Woolworth. But there are differences of quality, there is a higher and a lower, even among Woolworths. At Kyoto the shops had looked like threepenny bazaars. At Yokohama they were only penny ones.

We boarded our ship with thankfulness. 'Real' Japan had been delightful. But there had been more of the unreal than of the real, and the unreal, moreover, was obviously so much the more significant and important that it had quite eclipsed the real. In every country the places, the people, the institutions which are said by lovers of that country to constitute its 'real' self are the least characteristic and significant. Cornwall and county families and the Anglican Church may be the esoterically 'real' England. But the England that matters, that makes history, that impresses itself on the world, and casts its shadow into the future, is represented by Lancashire, Trade Unions, and Big Business Men. It is the same, I suppose, with Japan. Fuji and village life, traditional dances and cultured gentlemen of leisure, are what the lovers of Japan would have us believe to be the 'real' thing. But it is the unreal Japan, the wholesale producer of shoddy, which is at present projecting itself on history. Not the dancers, not the cultured and religious gentlemen, but the manufacturers of shoddy direct the country's policy. And in the enormous mining-camp cities more and more of the Japanese are being transformed, for good or for evil, from peasants and craftsmen into proletarian factory hands, the brothers of all the other proletarian workers of the world. The future of Japan, as of every other country, depends on its 'unreal' self. Some day, in the Utopian future, when things are very different from what they are now, English and Japanese patriots, desirous of exalting their respective countries, will point, not to Cornwall or Fuji, not to the county families or the descendants of the Tea Masters, but to Manchester and Osaka, to the cotton spinners and the weavers of silk. 'Here,' they will say, 'here is the real England, the real Japan.' Progress may be defined in this connection as the gradual transformation of what we now call 'unreal' into something sufficiently noble and decent to be styled 'real.' Meanwhile we have the misfortune to live in a world in which all that is historically significant is so repulsive that we are compelled, if we have any pride in our country or our human species, to practise a wholesale Christian Science on it and deny it reality.

*From* JESTING PILATE

# LOS ANGELES. A RHAPSODY

## FIRST MOVEMENT

DAYLIGHT had come to the common folk of Hollywood, the bright Californian daylight. But within the movie studio there shone no sun, only the lamps, whose intense and greenish-yellow radiance gives to living men and women the appearance of jaundiced corpses. In a corner of one huge barn-like structure they were preparing to 'shoot.' The camera stood ready, the corpse-lights were in full glare. Two or three cowboys and a couple of clowns lounged about, smoking. A man in evening-dress was trusting to his moustache to make him look like an English villain. A young lady, so elegant, so perfectly and flawlessly good-looking that you knew her at once for the Star, was sitting in a corner, reading a book. The Director—it seemed a waste that such a profile should be *au-dessus de la mêlée* instead of in the pictures—gave her a courteous hail. Miss X looked up from her literature. 'It 's the scene where you see the murder being committed,' he explained. Miss X got up, put away the book and beckoned to her maid, who brought her a comb and a mirror. 'My nose all right?' she asked, dabbing on powder. 'Music!' shouted the Director. 'Make it emotional.' The band, whose duty it is in every studio to play the actors into an appropriate state of soul, struck up a waltz. The studio was filled with a sea of melodic treacle; our spirits rocked and wallowed on its sticky undulations. Miss X handed back her powder-puff to the maid and walked up to the camera. 'You hide behind that curtain and look out,' the Director explained. Miss X retired behind the curtain. 'Just the hand first of all,' the Director went on. 'Clutching. Then the face, gradually.' 'Yes, Mr. Z,' came the quiet voice of the Star from behind the hanging plush. 'Ready?' asked the Director. 'Then go ahead.' The camera began to purr, like a genteel variety of dentist's drill. The curtain slightly heaved. A white hand clutched at its edge. 'Terror, Miss X,' called the Director. The white hand tightened its clutch in a spasm of cinematographic fear. The Director nodded to the bandmaster. 'Put some pep into it,' he adjured. Pep was put in; the billows of treacle rose higher. 'Now the face, Miss X. Slowly. Just one eye. That 's good. Hold it. A little more terror.' Miss X heart-rendingly registered her alarm. 'That 's good. That 's very good. O.K.' The camera stopped purring. Miss X came out from behind the curtain and walked back to her chair. Reopening her book, she went on quietly reading about Theosophy.

We moved on and, after halting for a few moments on our way to watch some more terror being registered (by a man this time and under a different Director), penetrated into the secret places of the studio. We pronounced passwords, quoted the Manager's permission, disclaimed connections with rival companies, and were finally admitted. In one room they were concocting miracles and natural cataclysms—typhoons in bathtubs and miniature earthquakes, the Deluge, the Dividing of the Red Sea, the Great War in terms of toy tanks and Chinese fire-crackers, ghosts, and the Next World. In another they were modelling prehistoric animals and the architecture of the remote future. In cellars below ground, mysteriously lighted by red lamps and smelling of chemicals, a series of machines was engaged in developing and printing the films. Their output was enormous. I forget how many thousands of feet of art and culture they could turn out each day. Quite a number of miles, in any case.

## SECOND MOVEMENT

Emerging, I bought a newspaper. It was Saturday's; a whole page was filled with the announcements of rival religious sects, advertising the spiritual wares that they would give away or sell on the Sabbath. 'Dr. Leon Tucker with the Musical Messengers in a Great Bible Conference. 3 Meetings To-morrow. Organ Chimes, Giant Marimbaphone, Vibraphone, Violin, Piano, Accordeon, Banjo, Guitar, and other Instruments. Wilshire Baptist Church.' The Giant Marimbaphone was certainly tempting. But in the First Methodist Church (Figueroa at Twentieth) they were going to distribute 'Mother's Day Flowers to all Worshippers.' (On Mother's Day you must wear a red carnation if your mother is alive, a white one if she is dead. The florists are everywhere the most ardent of matriolaters.) Moreover, they had booked the exclusive services of Dr. James H. Maclaren, Dramatic Orator, who was going to give his well-known stunt, 'Impersonations of Lincoln and

Roosevelt.' 'Dr. Maclaren,' we were informed, 'comes with a unique, original, eloquent, instructive, and inspiring Message concerning two of our Great Presidents. Uplifting and inspiring. It will do your soul good. The wonderful Messages of these two Great Presidents will be brought home with new emphasis and you will feel that you have spent the evening in the company of Great Spirits. Hear the great organ, Quartet of Artists and Vested Chorus.' At the Hollywood Congregational Church there were to be moving pictures of Jackie Coogan in his crusade to the Near East; the prospect was a draw. But then so was the photograph of Miss Leila Castberg of the Church of Divine Power (Advanced Thought); her performance might not be very interesting—she was scheduled to preach at the Morosco Theatre on Divine Motherhood—but the face which looked out from her advertisement was decidedly pleasing. Less attractive, to the devout male at any rate, were the photos of Messrs. Clarke and Van Bruch; but the phrasing of their ad. was enough to counteract in the mind of the reader the effect produced by their portraits. 'IT 'S ON, FOLKS, IT 'S ON,' so the announcement ran. 'The tide is rising at an OLD-FASHIONED REVIVAL. Every night except Monday, 7.30 P.M. Soul-stirring sermons and songs. Special to-night! Hear 10 Evangelists—10. Van Bruch-Clarke Evangelistic Party.'

Jazz it up, jazz it up. Keep moving. Step on the gas. Say it with dancing. The Charleston, the Baptists. Radios and Revivals. Uplift and Gilda Gray. The pipe organ, the nigger with the saxophone, the Giant Marimbaphone. Hymns and the movies and Irving Berlin. Petting Parties and the First Free United Episcopal Methodist Church. Jazz it up! 'N. C. Beskin, the CONVERTED JEW, back from a successful tour, will conduct a tabernacle campaign in Glendale. "WHY I BECAME A CHRISTIAN?" Dressed in Jewish garb. Will exhibit interesting paraphernalia.' Positively the last appearance. The celebrated Farmyard Imitations. 10 Evangelists—10. The finest troupe of Serio-Comic Cyclists ever. Onward Christian Soldiers. Abide with me. I 'm gonna bring a water melon to my girl to-night.

### THIRD MOVEMENT

Mother's Day. (Mr. Herring of Indiana, 'The Father of Mother's Day.') But why not Flapper's Day? It would be more representative, more democratic, so to speak. For in Joy City there are many more Flappers—married as well as unmarried—than Mothers.

> Nunc vitiat uterum quae vult formosa videri,
> Raraque in hoc aevo est quae velit esse parens.

Thousands and thousands of flappers, and almost all incredibly pretty. Plumply ravishing, they give, as T. S. Eliot has phrased it, a 'promise of pneumatic bliss.' Of pneumatic bliss, but of not much else, to judge by their faces. So curiously uniform, unindividual, and blank. Hardly more expressive — to the foreign eye, at any rate—than any of the other parts of that well-contoured anatomy which they are at such pains to display.

On the beaches of the Pacific that display was indeed superb. Mack Sennett Bathing Beauties by the hundred. They gambolled all around us, as we walked up and down in the windy sunlight along the sands. Frisking temptations. But we were three St. Anthonies—Charlie Chaplin and Robert Nichols and I—three grave theologians of art, too deeply absorbed in discussing the way of cinematographic salvation to be able to bestow more than the most casual attention on the Sirens, however plumply deserving.

## Fourth Movement

Cocktail time. (We 've dealt with the same bootlegger for upwards of two years now. A most reliable man.) Ice rattles in the shaker—a dance of miniature skeletons—and the genuinely reliable liquor is poured out. *A boire, à boire!* Long live Pantagruel! This is dry America. We climbed into our host's car and drove, it seemed interminably, through the immense and sprawling city. Past movie palaces and theatres and dance-halls. Past shining shops and apartments and enormous hotels. On every building the vertical lines of light went up like rockets into the dark sky. And the buildings themselves—they too had almost rocketed into existence. Thirty years ago Los Angeles was a one-horse—a half-horse—town. In 1940 or thereabouts it is scheduled to be as big as Paris. As big and as gay. The great Joy City of the West.

And what joy! The joy of rushing about, of always being busy, of having no time to think, of being too rich to doubt.

The joy of shouting and bantering, of dancing and for ever dancing to the noise of a savage music, of lustily singing.

(Yes, sir, she 's my Baby.
No, sir,' don't say 'Maybe.'
Yes, sir, she 's my Baby now.)

The joy of loudly laughing and talking at the top of the voice about nothing. (For thought is barred in this City of Dreadful Joy and conversation is unknown.) The joy of drinking prohibited whisky from enormous silver flasks, the joy of cuddling provocatively bold and pretty flappers, the joy of painting the cheeks, of rolling the eye, and showing off the desirable calves and figure. The joy of going to the movies and the theatre, of sitting with one's fellows in luxurious and unexclusive clubs, of trooping out on summer evenings with fifty thousand others to listen to concerts in the open air, of being always in a crowd, never alone. The joy of going on Sundays to hear a peppy sermon, of melting at the hymns, of repenting one's sins, of getting a kick out of uplift. The joy, in a word, of having what is technically known as a Good Time.

And oh, how strenuously, how whole-heartedly the people of Joy City devote themselves to having a Good Time! The Good Times of Rome and Babylon, of Byzantium and Alexandria were dull and dim and miserably restricted in comparison with the superlatively Good Time of modern California. The ancient world was relatively poor; and it had known catastrophe. The wealth of Joy City is unprecedentedly enormous. Its light-hearted people are unaware of war or pestilence or famine or revolution, have never in their safe and still half-empty Eldorado known anything but prosperous peace, contentment, universal acceptance. The truest patriots, it may be, are those who pray for a national calamity.

On and on we drove, through the swarming streets of Joy City. (One automobile, sir, to every three and a quarter inhabitants.) The tall buildings impended, the lights whizzed up like rockets. On and on. Across an open space there suddenly loomed up a large white building, magically shining against the intensified blackness of the sky behind. (Just finished, sir, the Temple of the Elks.) From its summit the beams of half a dozen searchlights waved to heaven. They seemed the antennae of some vast animal, feeling and probing in the void—for what? For Truth, perhaps? Truth is not wanted in the City of Dreadful Joy. For Happiness? It is possessed. For God? But God had already been found; He was inside the shining Temple; He *was* the Temple, the brand-new, million-dollar Temple, in which at this moment the initiates of the venerable Order of Elks were congregated to worship, not the effetely aristocratic Lady Poverty, but plain American Mrs. Wealth. Five or six hundred motor cars stood parked outside the doors. What *could* those luminous antennae be probing for? Why, for nothing, of course, for nothing! If they waved so insistently, that was just for fun. Waving for waving's sake. Movement is a joy, and this is the Great Joy City of the West.

### FIFTH MOVEMENT

The restaurant is immense. The waiters sprint about, carrying huge dishes of the richest food. What Gargantuan profusion! Great ten-pound chops, square feet of steak, fillets of whale, whole turkeys stewed in cream, mountains of butter. And the barbarous music throbs and caterwauls unceasingly. Between each juicy and satiating course, the flappers and the young men dance, clasped in an amorous wrestle. How Rabelais would have adored it! For a week, at any rate. After that, I am afraid, he would have begun to miss the conversation and the learning, which serve in his Abbey of Thelema as the accompaniment and justification of pleasure. This Western pleasure, meaty and raw, untempered by any mental sauce—would even Rabelais's unsqueamish stomach have been strong enough to digest it? I doubt it. In the City of Dreadful Joy Pantagruel would soon have died of fatigue and boredom. *Taedium laudamus*—so reads (at any rate for the inhabitants of Rabelais's continent) the triumphant canticle of Californian joy.

The restaurant is suddenly plunged into darkness. A great beam of light, like the Eye of God in an old engraving, stares down from somewhere near the ceiling, right across the room, squinting this way and that, searching—and at last finding what it had been looking for: a radiant figure in white, the singer of the evening. A good, though not superlatively good singer in the style of Ethel Levey or Jenny Golder.

> You gotta feed a chicken corn,
> You gotta feed a seal fish,
> You gotta feed a man (significant pause and
> *oeillade*) Love.

And so on. The enthusiasm which greets these rhymed lectures in elementary physiology is inordinate. Being enthusiastic is a joy. We are in Joy's metropolis.

There is a final burst of applause. The divine eyelid closes down over God's shining eye. The band strikes up again. The dancing re-begins. The Charleston, the fox-trot. 'There is only one first-class civilization in the world to-day. It is right here, in the United States and the Dominion of Canada.' Monkeyville, Bryan, the Ku-Klux-Klan. 'Europe's is hardly second class, and Asia's is fourth to sixth class.' Jazz it up; jazz it up! And what did late, great Ambassador Page have to say? 'The whole continent (of Europe) is rotten, or tyrannical, or yellow dog. I wouldn't give Long Island or Moore County for the whole continent of Europe.' And with Coney Island added to Long Island and Los Angeles in the scale along with Moore County, he might have thrown in all Asia and the British Empire. Three cheers for Page! Yes, sir, 'American idealism had made itself felt as a great contributory force to the advancement of mankind.' Three cheers for George F. Babbitt and the Rotary Club! And three cheers for Professor Nixon Carver! 'Prosperity,' the Professor has said, 'is coming to us precisely because our ideas are not materialistic. All these things (e.g. the Elks Temple, the jazz bands, the movie palaces, the muffins at breakfast) are added to us precisely because we are seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.' Three cheers more—thrice three! The Prof. deserves them.

It is almost midnight. A few minutes and it will be the Sabbath. A few hours and the Giant Marimbaphone will be proclaiming the glory of the new billion-dollar God. At the Ambassador Hotel (alas, too expensive for me to stay at) Dr. Ernest Holmes will be preaching on 'The Science of Jesus.' It is time to go home. Farewell, farewell. Parting is such sweet sorrow. Did Tosti raise his bowler hat when he said 'Good-bye'?

*From* JESTING PILATE

# GUATEMALA CITY

The capital is a pleasant, if rather ugly, town, about as populous as Norwich, but more extensive. Earthquakes are frequent, and it is therefore customary to build houses of only a single story. Defect of height has to be made up for by excess of length and breadth; you can walk a surprisingly long way without coming to the end of this town of only a hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants. In area, at least, it is a metropolis.

The *monde* of Guatemala consists of the local Spanish-American aristocracy, with which, since it tends to keep itself to itself, the casual visitor makes very few contacts, and of the resident foreigners, circling planet-wise, at graded hierarchical distances, around their respective legations. Most of the familiar features of colonial life are reproduced in Guatemala with a punctual fidelity. There are the usual clubs—American, Golf, Country, and German—and, between six and eight every evening, in the covered *patios* of the two principal hotels, the usual whiskies and sodas. Happily, nobody feels it necessary to keep up prestige by means of ceremonial magic; there is none of that wearisome 'dressing for dinner,' which is one of the curses of tropical existence under the Union Jack.

The civilized, non-Indian fraction of the Guatemalan community has suffered severely from the depression. Coffee does not sell, or sells at a loss; and the same is true of bananas, of sugar, of cattle, of mahogany—of everything, indeed, which Guatemala ever exported.

In the streets of the capital you see but few traces of that flashing Parisian modishness which illuminates Caracas. Venezuelan oil, we must presume, is more profitable than Guatemalan coffee. Still, the Guatemalan ladies are not without elegance. They know, at any rate, how to set off becomingly their own peculiar style of beauty. And what lovely creatures some of them are! A certain amount of Indian blood flows in the veins of practically every European family that has been long established in Central America. Not more than three hundred thousand Spaniards settled in New Spain during the whole colonial epoch—a thousand white immigrants a year, of whom the great majority were men. These men begot children; but the only women they could beget them on were Indians, or part-Indians. Somewhere in the history of almost all the white Creole families there is, inevitably, a copper-coloured ancestress. This slight admixture of Indian blood results in a strange and very striking type of feminine beauty. The eyes are large and expressively Spanish, the cheek-bones Indian and high. Indian or Andalusian, the smooth opaque skin invites an artificial complexion. The shoulders are broad, like the Indians', the bosom deep; but the arms are slender, the extremities small. A strange beauty, I repeat, and for some reason extraordinarily fragile-looking and precarious, as though it were on the verge of disappearing and to-morrow would no longer be there. And for all I know to the contrary, it probably won't be there. Tough and durable youthfulness is a product of the temperate zone, the modern beauty parlour, and the culture of the abdomen. Some of our professional beauties are almost everlasting.

> Et, chêne, elle a vécu ce que vivent les chênes. . . .

But here, near the Equator, it is still, as in Malherbe's day it was with us, a matter of roses.

A new session of Congress was to begin that morning, and the President would open his parliament in state. On our way to the market we were held up for more than an hour by the mere anticipation of his passage. The route was lined with troops and, even with the great man an hour away in his palace, nobody was allowed to pass. The soldiers were stumpy little men, not much more on an average than five foot three or four in their boots. They were all pure Indians from some village in the highlands; but at a first glance one might have taken them for Japs, and, after a second, wondered if perhaps they weren't Eskimos. Whites and *ladinos* were conspicuously absent from the ranks. They can afford to buy their freedom from military service. Nor, I imagine, do the authorities greatly encourage them to enter the lower grades of the army. In a country liable to revolutionary disturbances, rulers have always preferred to surround themselves with foreign rather than with native troops. However good their discipline, you can never be quite sure that soldiers will obey when they are ordered to shoot their own people. With foreigners there will be little risk of such compunctious insubordination. A Sikh regiment would hardly have fired on the crowd in the Jalianwalabagh at Amritsar; but when General Dyer gave his order, the Gurkhas blazed away with perfect equanimity. Every Central American nation is in reality two nations. These Quichés and Cakchiquels from the hills are as foreign in the white and *ladino* capital as Nepalese in the Punjab. They can be relied on to obey any orders. Whether the officers can be relied on to give the right orders is another question which it would be vain in this land of *pronunciamientos* to discuss.

Cavalry at the trot and, in the midst, a top-hat, gliding; some cheers, some military trumpeting, out of tune. The President had passed. We were free at last to cross the road.

The covered market was as large as several cathedrals and crowded. Tiny Indian women, carrying their own weight in farm produce and always with a baby or two slung like haversacks over their shoulders, moved hither and thither silently on bare feet. Whole families of dark-skinned peasants squatted immovably in the fairway. *Ladino* housewives stood bargaining at the stalls. The tone of their voices when they spoke to the Indian vendors was either arrogant or, if meant to be kindly, condescending. Central American half-castes are brought up to be a good deal more Aryan than the Aryans. Their attitude towards those who, after all, are their mother's people, is almost invariably offensive. They despise the Indians, take no interest in their customs, and feel it as a personal offence that the foreigner should pay so much attention to them. A sense of inferiority calls—with what dismal regularity!—for over-compensation. How much of every human being is an automaton? Three-quarters? Four-fifths? Nine-tenths? I do not know; but in any case the proportion is depressingly high. In all our Central American wanderings we did not meet a single *ladino* who was not over-compensating. The mechanism functioned infallibly, like a Rolls-Royce.

Meanwhile, we had been slowly jostling our way down narrow aisles whose walls were banked-up flowers and vegetables and tropical fruits. The profusion was fabulous. The market at Guatemala is the only place where I have seen reality outdoing a Dutch still life. The meanest fruit stall was one in the eye for Snyder and the Van Heems. 'Put *that* in your pipe, Weenix,' it seemed to proclaim, 'and smoke it—if you can.'

The display of local handicrafts was meagre and of disappointingly poor quality. A few specimens of native weaving and embroidery were amusing enough in a crude, unsubtle way, and we found some hat bands made of plaited horse-hair which were really astonishingly pretty. But that was all. We consoled ourselves with the thought that there would probably be better stuff in the country plazas.

Outside in an overflow market we saw an old Indian woman selling iguanas. They were cheap; you could buy a miniature dragon with three feet of whip-lash tail, all alive, for twenty or thirty cents. Flayed and gutted, the dried carcasses of several more lay in a neat row on the pavement, a pale meat crusty with flies. Near them stood an enormous bowl, full of iguana eggs. Curiosity wrestled with prejudice and was at last defeated; we moved away, leaving the eggs untasted. That evening we happened to pass again along the same street. Business in lizards had evidently been slack; the old woman's pitch was still crawling with monsters. While we were looking, she began to pack up her wares for the night. One by one, she took up the animals and dumped them into a circular basket. The tails projected, writhing. Angrily she shoved them back into place; but while one was being folded away, another would spring out, and then another. It was like a battle with the hydra. The abhorred tails were finally confined under a net. Then, hoisting the lizards on to her head, and with the bowl of their eggs under her arm, the old woman marched away, muttering as she went heaven knows what imprecations against all reptiles, and probably, since she shot a furious look in our direction, all foreigners as well.

The little Indian soldiers looked very smart in their khaki uniforms; their equipment was neat and new; the rifles they carried seemed the last word in scientific murder. The Guatemalan army is reputed to be efficient and, considering the size and resources of the country, it is certainly large. And what is it for? For police work within the country? But half a dozen aeroplanes, a few light tanks and armoured cars, and a small but highly disciplined force of mounted infantry would be amply sufficient to preserve order even in a land of *pronunciamientos*. No, these big battalions are not for domestic consumption; they are for export—'for defence against foreign aggression,' as our statesmen more gracefully put it.

In the case of Guatemala the foreign aggression can only come from, and the export of battalions only proceed to, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica on the one side, and Mexico and British Honduras on the other. The Mexican state of Chiapas long was, and British Honduras still is, regarded by the Guatemalans as an *irredenta*. But Mexico and the British Empire are too formidable for any military export trade to be worth attempting. Before such manifest impossibilities, even passion counts costs, considers self-interest and finally sees reason. No, Guatemala's military exports and imports have been, and for all practical purposes can only be, to and from the other four Central American Republics.

Central America achieved its independence from Spain in 1821, and during the succeeding century the Five Republics into which the old Captaincy General of Guatemala was broken have been at war, in various permutations and combinations of alliance, four or five times, and on two other occasions have escaped war only as the result of foreign arbitration.

To understand European politics, one should read the history of Central America. This is not paradox, but scientific method. It is by studying the simple that we learn to understand the more complex phenomena of the same kind. The behaviour of children and lunatics throws light on the more elaborate behaviour of adults and the sane. Pavlov's dogs have explained many hitherto inexplicable characteristics of human beings. Most of the little we know about the anthropology of civilized peoples is the fruit of inquiries into the nature of primitive societies. Central America, being just Europe in miniature and with the lid off, is the ideal laboratory in which to study the behaviour of the Great Powers.

The most striking facts about the wars of Central America is that none of them has had an origin which could possibly be interpreted as economic. There has never been any question of capturing markets, destroying dangerous commercial competitors, seizing provinces for the sake of their industrially valuable resources. The wars of the Five Republics have been wars between Conservatives and Liberals, between Clericals and Anti-Clericals, between those who desired a single federal republic and those who claimed sovereign independence for each state. They have not been wars of interest, but of 'political principle'—in other words, wars of pure passion. Wars are now generally attributed to the machinations of rival groups of capitalists. Owning as they do the instruments of propaganda, they first emotionally involve the dumb deluded public (already prepared by all its education to be involved) in their private quarrels; then, when the emotional temperature is high enough, proceed, in their capacity as rulers, or powers behind thrones, to give the order for mobilization and slaughter.

This description is probably true enough; but it remains a mere description, requiring to be elucidated and explained. We want first of all to know why the exploiters quarrel; and, in the second place, why the exploited allow themselves to be involved.

The theorists of the left proclaim it almost as an axiom that, where there is private profit-taking, there of necessity must also be periodical war. But this is clearly untrue. If capitalists were interested only in the efficient exploitation of their victims (as would to heaven they had had the sense to be!) they would not waste their resources in fighting one another; they would combine to work out the most efficient scheme for squeezing profits out of the entire planet. That they do not do so—or do so only spasmodically and inadequately—is due to the fact that the exploiters are as much the slaves of the passions aroused by nationalism as the exploited. They own and use the instruments of propaganda, but are themselves the first to believe in, and to act upon, the nonsense they broadcast. These Machiavels are incapable of seeing their own best economic advantage. Peace, it is obvious, and internationalism pay; war on its present scale must, in the long run, inevitably harm the capitalists who bring it about. Nevertheless, they *do* bring it about—and believe, under the patriotic cant, that they are bringing it about in their own interests. They make war in order to increase the profits they derive from their particular system of nationalist economy at the expense of the profits derived by fellow-capitalists from rival systems. (Nationalism is against the higher economic interests of the exploiters; but it creates certain particular interests of monopoly which to some extent justify the capitalists in their appeal to arms on business grounds.) They also make and threaten wars on the Machiavellian principle that foreign dangers give the ruler an opportunity for strengthening his position at home. It is for this reason that all the post-War dictators have been scare-mongers and sabre-rattlers. The fear of each people for its neighbours confirms the power of the rulers who happen to be in office. But what is this power compared with the power that would be wielded by an oligarchy of world-rulers? And compared with the profits to be derived from a world-system of economy, how poor are the profits earned under a mere nationalist system! Moreover, modern war is demonstrably ruinous to economic activity and disruptive of social order. So far from enriching and strengthening himself by war on the present scale, the capitalist ruler is likely to lose in the convulsion most of such money and power as he possesses. In spite of which, our rulers insist that the political and economic system shall remain (to their own manifest disadvantage) nationalistic. Safe and profitable, internationalism is yet rejected. Why? Because all capitalist rulers are bound by a theology of passion that prevents them from rationally calculating their profits and losses. And so long as such a theology continues to be accepted by rulers, it makes no difference whether these are private profit-makers or bureaucrats representing 'the People.' The development of nationalistic state-socialism is not only possible; at the present moment, it actually seems a probability.

The truth is that our so-called wars of interest are really wars of passion, like those of Central America. To find a war of pure interest one must go far afield. The Opium War between England and China was one of the very few whose causes were purely and unadulteratedly economic. 'All for Hate,' is the title of every great international tragedy of modern times, 'or the World Well Lost.'

'*Les intérêts,*' writes the French philosopher, Alain, '*transigent toujours, les passions ne transigent jamais.*' Interests are always ready to compound, passions never. You can always discuss figures, haggle over prices, ask a hundred and accept eighty-five. But you cannot discuss hatred, nor haggle over contradictory vanities and prejudices, nor ask for blood and accept a soft answer. Neither can you argue away the immediately experienced fact that boasting is delightful, that it is bliss to feel yourself superior to the other fellow, that 'righteous indignation' is wildly intoxicating, and that the thrill of being one of a mob that hates another mob can be as pleasurably exciting as a prolonged orgasm. The exploited who succumb to the nationalist propaganda of the exploiters are having the time of their lives. We have asked what they get out of being involved in their masters' quarrels. In the early stages of being involved they get the equivalent of free seats at a magnificent entertainment, combining a revival meeting with championship boxing and a pornographic cinema show. At the call of King and Country, they spring to arms. Can we be surprised?

*La guerre naît des passions.* But before we begin to elaborate this proposition, we must ask ourselves the very pertinent question: whose passions? The passions of the people as a whole? Or only of the rulers? *Of both*, I believe, is the correct answer. It is the rulers, of course, who actually declare war; and they do so, first, because they are moved by passions that the theology of nationalism has taught them to regard as creditable; and, second, because they wish to defend interests which nationalism has either really created or which they themselves have invented to serve as a rational justification for their passions. But rulers cannot carry on a war unless the ruled are moved by the same passions or the same rationalizations of passions as themselves. Before war can be waged, the mass of the people must be made to imagine that they want the war; that the war is in their interests or at least unavoidable. This end is accomplished by a violent campaign of propaganda, launched at the time of the declaration of war. But such a campaign would not be effective if the people had not from earliest childhood been indoctrinated with the nationalist theology. Owing to this nationalistic conditioning of all their worst passions, the ruled are sometimes actually more warlike than their rulers, who find themselves reluctantly propelled towards a war which they would like to avoid. At other times, the ruled are less the slaves of nationalist passion and prejudice than the rulers. Thus, I think it would be true to say that, at present, the majority of French and English people are more pacific, less dangerously obsessed by the Moloch-theology of nationalism, readier to think of international politics in terms of reason, than are their governments. Rulers naturally tend to oppose the policy of the ruled. When the French populace was imbued with nationalism, the bourgeoisie was pacific. Now that it thinks of freedom, in terms not of nations, but classes, the rulers are nationalistic.

In the notes which follow, I shall discuss the war-producing passions themselves, without specific references to those who feel them. In practice, it is obvious, everything depends on the rulers. They can either encourage and systematize the expression of these passions; or, alternatively, they can prevent the theology of nationalism from being taught in the schools or propagated by other means. Rulers who wished to do so could rid the world of its collective insanity within a generation. Revolution by persuasion can be nearly as swift and 'catastrophic' as revolution by violence and, if carried out scientifically, promises to be incomparably more effective. The Jesuits and the Assassins have demonstrated what can be done by intelligent conditioning of the young. It is disastrous that the only people who have thoroughly learnt the lessons of Loyola and the Old Man of the Mountain should be the exponents of militant nationalism in Germany and Italy and the exponents of militant collectivism in Russia. War is the common denominator of all the existing systems of scientific conditioning.

So much for the people who feel the passions. Now for the passions themselves—hatred, vanity, and the nameless urge which men satisfy in the act of associating with other men in large unanimous droves.

It is reported of Alain that when, in the trenches, his fellow-soldiers complained of the miseries of war, he would answer: '*Mais vous avez eu assez de plaisir; vous avez crié Vive l'Armée ou Vive l'Alsace-Lorraine. Il faut que cela se paye. Il faut mourir.*'

Hate is like lust in its irresistible urgency; it is, however, more dangerous than lust, because it is a passion less closely dependent on the body. The emission of a glandular secretion suffices to put an end to lust, at any rate for a time. But hate is a spiritual passion, which no merely physiological process can assuage. Hate, therefore, has what lust entirely lacks—persistence and continuity: the persistence and continuity of purposive spirit. Moreover, lust is 'perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,' only before action; hate, both before and during action. In the case of lust, the time of action is limited to a few minutes or seconds, and with the ending of the action coincides the temporary or permanent ending of that particular passion of lust. Very different is the case of hatred. Its action may continue for years; nor does the ending of any particular phase of the action necessarily entail the ending of the emotional state which was its justification.

Hate is not, of course, the only passion behind the theory and practice of nationalism. Vanity—the collective vanity manifested by each individual member of a group which he regards as superior to other groups and whose superiority he feels in himself—vanity is equally important; and both these passions are combined with, and derive an added strength from, that lust for sociability whose indulgence yields such enormous psychological dividends to the individual of a gregarious species. At ordinary times, indeed, vanity seems to be more important than hate. But it must not be forgotten that hate is the actual or potential complement of vanity. Delusions of greatness are always accompanied by persecution mania. The paeans of self-praise with which the nationalists are perpetually gratifying themselves are always on the point of modulating into denunciations of other people. Hatred, even when not actually expressed, is always there just below the surface. One is therefore justified in speaking of this passion as fundamental in the contemporary theory and practice of nationalism.

So far as the physiology and psychology of individual human beings is concerned, there is nothing to prevent the pleasures of hatred from being as deliciously enduring as the pleasures of love in the Moslem paradise. Fortunately, however, hatred in action tends to be self-destructive. The intoxicating delight of being one of thousands bawling '*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,*' or '*Marchons, marchons, qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons,*' is apt to be brought speedily to a close. Bawling in mobs is almost as good as copulation; but the subsequent action generally leads to discomfort, extreme pain, and death all round. *Il faut que cela se paye*, and the payment entails the transformation of hatred from a source of pleasure to a source of misery, and in many cases the transformation of the hater himself into a corpse. This, I repeat, is fortunate; for if the gratification of hatred were always as delicious as it is sometimes, then there would obviously never be any interval of peace. As it is, the world seems *well* lost only so long as the action dictated by hatred remains successful. When it ceases to be successful, the loss of the world is realized and regretted, and the haters become homesick once more for a quiet life on friendly terms with their neighbours. But once a war has been started, they are not allowed, and do not even allow themselves, to succumb to this natural homesickness. Nationalism is a set of passions rationalized in terms of a theology. When, in the natural course of events, the passions tend to lose their intensity, they can be revived artificially by an appeal to the theology. Moreover, 'tasks in hours of insight—or orgasm—willed can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.' A theology, with its accompanying principles and categorical imperatives, is a mechanism for making it possible to do in cold blood the things which, if nature were left to itself, it would be possible to do only in hot blood.

The commonest, one might call it the natural, rhythm of human life is routine punctuated by orgies. Routine supports men's weakness, makes the fatigue of thought unnecessary, and relieves them of the intolerable burden of responsibility. Orgies, whether sexual, religious, sporting, or political, provide that periodical excitement which all of us crave, and which most of us are too insensitive to feel except under the most crudely violent stimulation. Hence (beside all the private and domestic orgies) such public stimulations as gladiatorial games, bull-fights, boxing matches, gambling; hence patriotic demonstrations, hymns of hate, mass meetings, and parades; hence saturnalia, carnivals, firsts of May, fourths and fourteenths of July; hence religious revivals, pilgrimages, miraculous grottoes, and all the techniques for arousing what Professor Otto has called the 'numinous' emotions. Sensitive and civilized men can dispense with these crude, almost surgical, methods for producing excitement. But sensitive and civilized men are rare — as rare as the Americans who, after ten years of prohibition, can enjoy a glass of good wine. The vast majority can only get their kick out of the equivalent of proof spirit. Consider in this context the adaptation to popular needs of the religion of Jesus. For Professor Otto, the essence of religion is the 'numinous' emotion in all its forms, from panic terror up to a rapturous awareness of the *mysterium tremendum fascinans* of the world. And so far as the religion of the ordinary, insensitive but excitement-loving person is concerned, this is probably true. Jesus, however, lays no stress on such emotions, nor prescribes any technique for arousing them. For him, it is clear, the surgical stimulation of deliberately induced ecstasy, of luscious ritual and corybantic revivalism were all entirely unnecessary. They were not unnecessary for his followers. These, in the course of a few hundred years, made Christianity almost as sensational and orgiastic as Hinduism. If they had not, there would have been no Christians.

The bearing of these facts on Central American wars, and international disputes in general, is obvious. Nationalistic theology is not only a substitute for passion; it is also an excuse for it. It justifies those periodical orgies of emotion which are, for the great majority of men and women, a psychological necessity. So long as these orgies remain platonic, no harm is done. They are a bit undignified, that is all. But if people need to get drunk, if they cannot preserve their soul's health without occasional orgasms of hatred, self-love, and group-frenzy, why, then, drunk they must get and orgasms they must have. The trouble is that the greatest *immediate* happiness of the greatest number too often leads to the greatest *ultimate* unhappiness. The orgies of nationalism are not platonic orgies-for-orgies'-sake. They lead to practical results—to the piling up of armaments, to senseless economic competition, to embargoes on foreign goods, and ultimately to war. *Il faut* *que cela se paye.* The fundamental problem of international politics is psychological. The economic problems are secondary and, but for the psychological problems, would not exist. The good intentions of such statesmen as desire peace—and many of them do not even desire it—are rendered ineffective by their consistent refusal to deal with the war-disease at its source. To attempt to cure symptoms, such as tariff-wars and armaments, without at the same time attacking the psychological causes of these symptoms, is a proceeding foredoomed to failure. What is the use of a disarmament or a World Economic Conference so long as the people of each nation are deliberately encouraged by their leaders to indulge in orgies of group-solidarity based on, and combined with, self-congratulation and contemptuous hatred for foreigners? Our need is rather for a World Psychological Conference, at which propaganda experts should decide upon the emotional cultures to be permitted and encouraged in each state and the appropriate mythologies and philosophies to accompany these emotional cultures.

Before we enter into the possible activities of such a conference it is necessary to consider the psycho-analytic theory of international relations set forth in Dr. F. Vergin's book, *Sub-Conscious Europe.* Dr. Vergin's contention is that war is an escape from the restraints of civilization. 'It is quite useless to demand higher standards of Christian morality and at the same time to preach peace.' Ethical restraints exact their own revenge. It is no coincidence that, in France, the parties most closely associated with Catholicism should be the most violently chauvinistic. All European parties with a Christian orientation are fundamentally warlike, because the psychological pressure of Christian restraint necessarily urges them on to find emotional relief in hatred. Such, in brief, is Dr. Vergin's theory. It has the merit of being simple and the defect of being perhaps a bit too simple. Ours is not the only civilization that has imposed restraints on the appetites of the individual. Every civilization imposes restraints: otherwise it would not exist. Again, not all restraints are felt to be restraints: people can be so conditioned as to accept certain artificial restraints as though they were part of the order of nature. The restraints which hedge in the individuals of a primitive society are more numerous and less escapable than those by which we are surrounded. In spite of which, many primitive and semi-primitive societies have been on the whole remarkably peaceable. For example, Mexico and Central America before their separation from Spain had enjoyed two centuries and a half of almost uninterrupted peace. And yet the population of these provinces laboured under restraints of all kinds—political restraints imposed from without, and psychological restraints imposed from within, as the result of stringent religious conditioning. According to Dr. Vergin's argument, the psychological pressure generated by such restraints should have driven the people into civil war. It did nothing of the kind, and for several good reasons. In the first place, all members of Spanish colonial society were brought up in an emotional culture that made them regard submission to King and Church, and reasonably decent behaviour towards their fellow-subjects, as unquestionably right and 'natural.' In the second place, their life was so arranged that they could get all the orgiastic excitements—religious ceremonies, dances, sports, public executions, and private wife-beatings—for which they periodically craved. This being so, they had no urgent psychological need for the orgies of militant nationalism. The dangerous psychological pressure, described by Dr. Vergin, is worked up only among puritans who disapprove and suppress all exciting and pleasurable activities whatsoever. 'Righteous indignation' is the only emotional orgasm these people allow themselves; they therefore live in a chronic state of hatred, disapproval, and uncharitableness. The rulers of Central America were not puritans and, while imposing socially valuable restraints upon their subjects, allowed them by way of compensation a plentiful choice of more or less harmless amusements. Furthermore, if any of them wanted to enjoy the pleasures of public hatred there were always Sir Francis Drake and Morgan and Dampier; there were always, besides the buccaneers and pirates, all the home-country's official enemies; there were always heretics, protestants, foreigners, and heathens. Objects of collective detestation in rich variety—and most of them, very fortunately, a long way off, so that it was possible, the greater part of the time, to enjoy the pleasures of nationalism platonically, without having to suffer the smallest inconvenience.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century this vast and, for long generations, peaceable Spanish colony transformed itself into six independent states, each in an almost chronic condition of civil war and each disliking all the rest so intensely that the civil war from time to time gave place to savage outbursts of fighting between state and state. The reasons for this strange and distressing metamorphosis are such as to deserve the most careful consideration by the delegates to our hypothetical World Psychological Conference.

From the very beginning, there had always been the best possible economic reasons why the Indians, the *mestizos*, and the American-born white Creoles should wish to revolt against the dominion of Spain. In varying degrees all were exploited by the distant government and, still more, by its lawless representatives on the spot. During the later seventeen-hundreds, as a result of Galvez's reforms, the economic condition of the country and its native-born inhabitants seems to have improved; it is probably true to say that, at the turn of the new century, there were actually fewer economic reasons for revolt than there ever had been in the history of the colonies. These fewer reasons were still, of course, many and enormous. But they would not in themselves have been enough to initiate a war of independence. The victims of oppression had been so thoroughly conditioned to accept the existing situation that they found the idea of revolt unthinkable. It became thinkable only when Napoleon deposed the legitimate king of Spain and usurped the throne for Joseph Bonaparte. Spanish-American loyalty had been, till then, astonishingly solid—a great arch, as it were, flung, in apparent defiance of all the laws of political physics, across a gulf of bottomless incompetence and iniquity. The millions of its component stones all centred upon, and were held together by, the keystone of the legitimate king's divine right to rule; and the art of the psychological engineers who raised it—the priests and the Spanish administrators—had consisted in suggesting the people into the conviction that this divine right was not only their keystone, but their rock of ages as well, and that without its presence, there, at the crown and centre of everything, they would be lost, non-existent, eternally damned. Napoleon brutally removed the possessor of the divine right to rule the Spanish empire. Deprived of its keystone, the arch disintegrated. The first symptoms of disintegration was the Indian revolt in Mexico headed by Hidalgo. This was an orthodox economic revolution of oppressed serfs—but an economic revolution made possible only by the removal of divine authority personified by Charles IV. Goya's old figure of fun was God's representative, and his deposition meant that, from being almost or completely unthinkable, revolution suddenly became not only thinkable but actable.

The most curious fact in the history of the Mexican and Central American revolt against Spain is that independence was actually proclaimed by the conservatives and catholics. More royalist than the king, they were afraid of what would happen to them if they remained connected with the liberal, constitutional Spain of 1820. To preserve their loyalty to a non-existent king-by-divine-right, they rebelled against the actual king, who, at that moment, had been forced to become a constitutional monarch.

So much for the revolt from Spain. The subsequent history of the ex-colonials is the history of men with a traditional culture of the emotions suitable to one kind of political régime, trying to establish another régime borrowed from abroad, and failing, because the new system could not be worked except by people brought up in an entirely different emotional culture. The whites, near-whites, and *mestizos*, who constituted the only politically conscious and politically active element in the population, had been brought up to accept the divine right of the king to rule them. At the same time they preserved the anarchic tradition of the Renaissance, regarding themselves as individuals, each having the right to do as well as he could for himself. Accordingly, we find reverence for the throne accompanied by evasion of its commands. The people were simultaneously convinced that the king had a divine right to make the laws, and that they, as individuals, had a divine right to disobey them whenever they could do so advantageously and without being found out. After the Bonapartist usurpation of 1808, the idea began to dawn upon them that they themselves might make the laws; which, in due course, after the declaration of independence, they proceeded to do. But unfortunately they had carried over from the *ancien régime* the idea that each man had also an inalienable right to break the laws. Such an idea was not too harmful under a monarchy, which provided a certain stability and continuity of rule. But it was fatal under a republic. Democratic institutions can only work where individuals have been conditioned to show public spirit and a sense of responsibility. The correct emotional culture for self-governing people is one that produces a feeling for honour and 'sportsmanship.' Battles may still be won on the playing-fields of Eton; but, what is perhaps more creditable to those elm-shadowed expanses of soggy turf, colonial empires are humanely lost there. That capacity to see the other fellow's point of view, that reluctance to exploit to the full his chronic weakness or momentary disadvantage, that scrupulosity which Tennyson was already denouncing as 'the craven fear of being great,' and which (in spite of numerous individual and official backslidings has come more and more to be characteristic of the national policy towards subject races, are all the products of these playing-fields. Cricket and football prepared our administrators for the task of humanely ruling and for the more recent task of not ruling, and scepticism has finished off the job which games began. Of the newly invented Maxim gun, H. M. Stanley, the explorer, remarked: 'It is a fine weapon, and will be invaluable for subduing the heathen.' Nobody could utter such words now, because nobody has the kind of faith professed by Stanley. Given the means of action, all strong faith must inevitably result in persecution and attempts at the domination of others. Scepticism makes for tolerance and peaceable behaviour. All Central Americans were brought up as unsporting believers. Hence, with the disappearance of monarchy, the chronic misgovernment of every Central American state.

The newly fashionable idea of nationalism was imported along with the idea of self-government. Applying the logic of this philosophy of hatred and division to their own immediate problems, the people of Central America tried to make each administrative district into an independent country. There were moments when single departments of provinces (such as the department of Quezaltenango in Guatemala) declared their independence. But such extravagances of folly were not permitted by the other departments, whose representatives insisted on the new countries being at least as large as the old colonial provinces. These, Heaven knows, were small enough. The introduction of the nationalistic idea into Central America resulted in the dismemberment of a society which had hitherto been unquestionably one. Fellow-subjects of the same king, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, and having every possible economic reason for remaining united, the Mexicans and Central Americans were constrained by the emotional logic of an imported theology of hatred to renounce all their ties of blood and culture. Almost from one day to another this hitherto united society divided itself into six arbitrary groups of artificial enemies.

All enemies, except those fighting for the strictly limited food supply of a given territory, may be described as artificial enemies. But there are degrees of artificiality. The artificiality of the enmity between the Central Americans is of the highest order. Nationalism is the justificatory philosophy of unnecessary and artificial hatred. Under its influence, and in the absence of natural enemies, men will go out of their way to create artificial ones, so as to have objects on which to vent their hatred. Similarly, in the absence of women or of a subjective taste for women, men will imaginatively transform other men into artificial women, so as to have objects on which to vent their lusts. Like collective hatred, homosexuality has its justifying theology, adumbrated by Plato, and in recent years systematically worked out by M. André Gide. This author has done for the love of artificial women what Maurice Barrès did for the hatred of artificial enemies—moralized its pleasures and endowed them with a cosmic significance.

All enjoy the warmth that accompanies boasting, the fierce electric thrill of hatred. Some take pleasure in the act of fighting. But none enjoy (though it is extraordinary how many are ready stoically to bear) starvation, wounds, and violent death. That the Central Americans have derived intense satisfaction from the act of hating their new, artificial enemies is certain. But these moments of fun have been paid for by other moments of misery and pain. Would it not have been possible, the observer will ask, to invent a political system which would have given them all the emotional orgasms they needed at a smaller material and spiritual cost?

With this question upon our lips, we may now return to our hypothetical World Psychological Conference and, guided by the light which Central America has thrown on the problems of international relations, may profitably begin to inquire into the nature of its discussions.

The end proposed by our conference is international peace. The obstacle which it has to circumvent is nationalism. The material with which it has to deal is the psychology of very suggestible, rather insensitive, but emotional and excitement-loving people assembled in vast urban communities. The problem is to devise means for so treating this material that the obstacle may be avoided and the goal definitively reached.

The first thing our delegates would remark is that all governments deplore and carefully regulate the manifestations of lust, but deliberately encourage those of collective vanity and hatred. To boast mendaciously about one's own gang and to slander and defame other gangs are acts everywhere officially regarded as creditable and even pious. It is as though our rulers, instead of merely tolerating prostitution, were to proclaim the brothel to be a place as sacred as the cathedral and as improving as the public library. Doctrines like that of race superiority are the spiritual equivalent of cantharides. Under the Nazis, for example, every German is made to take his daily dose of what I may call Nordic Fly. The Marquis de Sade was condemned to a long term of imprisonment for having distributed aphrodisiac candies to a few prostitutes in Marseilles. But nationalists who devise means for arousing in millions the disgraceful passions of hatred, envy, and vanity are hailed as the saviours of their country.

One of the preliminary conditions of international peace is the inculcation of a new (or rather of a very old) scale of moral values. People must be taught to think hatred at least as discreditable as they now think lust; to find the more raucous manifestations of collective vanity as vulgar, low, and ludicrous as those of individual vanity.

Nationalists and militarists have tried to defend their position on ethical as well as on political grounds. War and nationalism are good, they say, because they stimulate individuals to display the more heroic virtues. But the same argument could be brought forward in favour of prostitution. There is a whole literature describing the devotion and tenderness, the benevolence and, positively, the saintliness of whores. But nobody regards this literature as justifying the wholesale encouragement of whoredom. Man's is a double nature and there is hardly any critical situation in which he will not display, simultaneously or alternately, the most repulsive characteristics of an animal and a heroism equal to that of the martyrs. Nationalism and war stimulate men to heroism, but also to bestiality. So far as individuals are concerned, the bad cancels out the good. And so far as society is concerned, the bad — that is to say the harmful—enormously predominates. War and nationalism are without any possible justification.

But ethical justifications are not what our hypothetical delegates have come together to discuss. They have come together to discuss the psychological conditions for international peace. Ethical justifications are mainly useful after the fact—to confirm individuals in certain types of socially useful behaviour.

I will assume—what, alas, is sadly improbable—that our delegates have agreed in principle on the need for all governments to discourage the manifestations by their subjects of collective hatred and hatred-producing vanity. Having done this, they find themselves immediately faced by the problem of Prohibition. The prohibition of any activity that gives people great psychological satisfactions is very difficult to carry out and, if carried out, may lead to all kinds of unexpected and distressing consequences. Zeal to convert and civilize the Melanesians is leading to their extinction; deprived of all that, for them, made life worth living, they simply cease to live. The effort to make Americans more sober resulted in an increase of alcoholism and criminality. Puritanism carried to its logical conclusions notoriously leads to sadism. And so on; the dangers of untempered prohibition are everywhere apparent. Many activities are psychologically satisfying, but socially harmful. Suppression of these should always be accompanied by the offer of an alternative activity, as rewarding to the individuals engaged in it, but socially harmless or, if possible, beneficial. This is the principle behind all enlightened colonial administration at the present time. Thus, the head hunters in New Guinea have been persuaded to use for all ritual purposes the heads, not of human beings, but of wild boars; this modification accepted, they are at liberty to perform all the elaborate and psychologically rewarding ceremonies prescribed by their religion. Psychologically, the abolition of militant nationalism in Europe is the equivalent of the abolition of head hunting in Papua. Our imaginary delegates are depriving the people of a great many opportunities for emotional excitement. What alternatives do they propose to supply? This is a difficult problem, completely soluble, I imagine, only by an experimental process of trial, error, and retrial. 'Hate,' as Dr. Vergin has justly remarked, 'pays a higher psychological dividend than can be obtained from international amity, sympathy, and co-operation.' Benevolence is tepid; hatred and its complement, vanity, are stinging hot and high-flavoured. That is why National Socialism is so much easier to popularize than the League of Nations. It will be the task of the psychological engineers to see how far co-operation can be combined with socially harmless, but psychologically rewarding, competitions and rivalry. Rivalry, for example, in industry. (The Russians have exploited this kind of friendly competition in the attempt to get more work out of their factory hands.) Rivalry in sports. Rivalry—but this, alas, would probably arouse not the smallest popular enthusiasm—in scientific and artistic achievement. The substitutes for militant nationalism may be almost as exciting as the things they replace. Thus, at Constantinople, feeling at the chariot races ran so high that Greens and Blues were ready to kill one another by the thousand. It is clear that the homoeopathic remedy for militant nationalism can be made as fatal as the disease.

In the course of their labours, our delegates will be called upon to answer a number of very difficult questions. Here are a few of them.

In what circumstances and by means of what technique can you persuade people into the placid acceptance of prohibitions? When and how can you condition them into regarding artificial restraints as inevitable and 'natural' limitations of all human life?

Again, what sort of emotional compensations must be given in exchange for specific kinds of prohibition? And how much emotional excitement, how many orgies, do people need to keep them contented and in health?

Finally, can the benevolently intelligent ruler dispense altogether with collective hatred? Or is it a necessary and irreplaceable instrument for the welding of small societies into greater wholes?

To the first question our delegates would probably be unable to return a definite answer. They would observe that, as a matter of historical fact, the members of isolated and homogeneous communities have often been persuaded to accept the oddest and most arbitrary restraints as natural limitations. Members of heterogeneous communities in frequent contact with foreigners tend to lose unquestioning faith in the local mythology, and are therefore less amenable to the powerful instruments of persuasion provided by religion. There is a sense in which modern society can say with M. Valéry, '*la bêtise n'est pas mon fort.*' True, the intrinsic and congenital stupidity of the majority is as great as it ever was. But it is a stupidity which has been educated in the ideas invented by the relatively free intelligence of exceptional individuals. The result of this education is that stupid people are now no longer able to swallow the sort of theology which their predecessors unquestioningly accepted. Universal education has created an immense class of what I may call the New Stupid, hungering for certainty, yet unable to find it in the traditional myths and their rationalizations. So urgent has been this need for certainty that in place of the dogmas of religion they have accepted (with what passionate gratitude!) the pseudo-religious dogmas of nationalism. These are more obviously false and mischievous than the dogmas of religion; but they possess, for the New Stupid, the enormous merit of being concerned, not with invisible, but with visible entities. Nationalism is not the theory of a God whom nobody has seen. It is a theory of some actual country and its flesh-and-blood inhabitants. The theory is demonstrably untrue; but that does not matter. What matters to the New Stupid is that the subject of the theory is real. The New Stupidity is positivistic. One of the tasks of our delegates will be the devising of a mythology and a world-view which shall be as acceptable to the New Stupid as nationalism and as beneficial as the best of the transcendental religions.

To the two questions in the second group no definite answer can be given, except on the basis of a specific research. The balance-sheet of psychological equivalents has yet to be drawn up; nevertheless, a rather vague, but useful, generalization is possible. Rulers can impose many prohibitions, provided that the people on whom they are imposed have been given sufficiently lively and interesting orgies. The problem, obviously, is to define 'sufficiently.' But there is no one definition; for what is sufficient for people in one set of circumstances is insufficient for people in another. Thus, the orgy-system of the Central Americans, simple and unpretentious as it was, seems to have been quite sufficient for their needs. The fact that they bore, almost without complaint, the enormous oppression of their rulers, is evidence that, psychologically, they were satisfied. To-day we have a choice of diversions incomparably wider than theirs. Nevertheless, our elaborate orgy-system is probably insufficient for our needs. Living as we do in an age of technological progress, and therefore of incessant change, we find that we cannot be amused except by novelties. The traditional orgies which, without undergoing the smallest modification, refreshed our ancestors during long centuries of history, now seem to us intolerably insipid. Nothing can be new enough for us. Even the most exciting and elaborate of our amusements cannot satisfy for long. Nor is this the only reason for the insufficiency of our orgy-system. The processions, dances, and even the sports of the Central Americans were related to their mythology. It was to do honour to St. Joseph that one marched round the town with candles and a drum; one fought cocks or baited bulls to celebrate the Assumption of the Mother of God; one danced for St. Francis or, on the sly, for the Feathered Serpent of the old dispensation: one did magic in the name of St. Peter and got drunk because it was All Souls' Day. What was, and still is, true of Central America used to be true, until quite recent times, of Europe. To-day all diversions have been laicized. This has happened partly as a result of the positivistic tendencies of the New Stupidity; partly owing to the fact that all entertainments are in the hands of joint-stock companies, whose interest it is that people shall amuse themselves, not only on mythologically significant occasions, but every day and all the time. The result is that 'our laughter and our tears mean but themselves,' and, meaning but themselves, mean curiously little. Hence the prodigious success of the entertainments organized by up-to-date mob leaders in the name of nationalism. Mussolini and Hitler have restored to the New Stupid some of the substantial pleasures enjoyed by the Old Stupidity. Can these pleasures be restored in some other and less pernicious name than that of collective hatred and vanity?

We have seen that people will put up with all kinds of prohibitions, provided that they are given psychologically 'sufficient' compensations. Granted qualitative sufficiency, what is the amount of emotional stimulation necessary for health? How many orgies—or rather, since it is the minimum that interests us, how few—do human beings require? Only prolonged field-work would permit one to return a scientifically accurate answer. At present, all one can say is that the appetite for emotional stimulation varies greatly from individual to individual, and that populations at large seem to be able now to support very large doses of emotional excitement, now to content themselves with very small doses.

Some people have a very powerful appetite for emotional excitement—or else, which is perhaps the same thing, are cursed with an insensitiveness that only surgical methods can awake to feeling. These, in a peaceable state, are apt to be a nuisance. In the past, most of them could be counted on to destroy themselves by crusading, duelling, piracy, and, more recently, by exploring and colonial adventuring. Unhappily, the last of these overseas outlets for violence are being closed—in some cases have been closed already. Germany, for example, has no colonies as a safety-valve for her more ferocious young men. Perhaps that is why Hitler found such a rich supply of them in the streets of Munich and Berlin. The Jews and the Communists are paying for the annexation of Tanganyika and German South-West Africa. For the Nazi gunmen they provide, so to speak, a Colony in Every Home. Among the Indians of Central America, a good deal of what would otherwise have been dangerous political violence was probably absorbed in the domestic circle; wives, children, and village delinquents were the 'Jews,' the 'Reds,' the 'Coloured Races,' on whom they vented their native brutality and wreaked vengeance for the wrongs done them by their conquerors. With us, wives and children are pretty effectively protected by the law; that immemorial safety-valve is tightly screwed down. Moreover, darkest Africa is rapidly ceasing to be dark, and its inhabitants are beginning to be treated almost as though they were human beings—or, better, almost as though they were Our Dumb Friends. Soon the violent individuals of even the imperialistic nations will have to look elsewhere for their dangerous adventures and, lacking real Hottentots to bully, will be forced to transform the more helpless of their unpopular neighbours into artificial Hottentots. (In this context, it is not the colour of a posterior that counts; it is its kickableness.) One of the minor tasks of our conference will be to provide born adventurers and natural slave-drivers with harmless and unharmable blackamoor *Ersatzes*, with safe, humane, but satisfying Putumayo-surrogates.

That communities have flourished for centuries without the stimuli of militant nationalism is certain. But the trouble is, that such peaceable societies (of whom the Old Empire Mayas seem to have been one) lived in circumstances very different from those of to-day and were composed of individuals, in whom consciousness had developed along other lines than those by which the modern European mind has advanced. So far as we are concerned, they are Utopias, admirable but fundamentally irrelevant. My own conviction is that, in this matter of emotional stimulation, quality is strictly a function of quality. If routine is easy, comfortable, and secure, and if all the organized emotional stimulations are qualitatively satisfying, then the number and variety of orgies can safely be reduced. Nationalism flourishes among the New Stupid of our contemporary world for two reasons: first, because the common orgies of daily life are such poor quality; and, second, because the routine, which is the complement and necessary background of such orgies, has been disturbed. This disturbance is due in large measure to the practical application of nationalism to politics, and results in a state of mind that welcomes nationalism for the sake of the exciting distractions it creates and theoretically justifies. The movement is, as usual, circular and vicious. Routine and orgies. Or, as the Romans preferred to put it, bread and circuses. Still, as always, the universal demand. Men cannot live by bread alone. But neither can they live only by circuses. To some extent, however, a shortage of bread can be made up for by a surfeit of circuses. All the mob leaders of the post-War years have pursued the same policy: they have organized political circuses in order to distract people's attention from their hunger and the prevailing social uncertainty. Unable to fill empty bellies with bread, they aim instead at filling empty heads with flags and verbiage and brass bands and collective hysteria. The Nazis are preparing, as I write, to hold a hundred and fifty thousand political meetings in two months. We may parody the words of the old song and ask:

> Will the hate that you 're so rich in
> Light a fire in the kitchen,
> And the little god of hate turn the spit, spit, spit?

Alas, he won't; and one day the public for whom these political circuses are so lavishly organized will grasp the distressing truth and say, with Queen Victoria, 'We are not amused.'

This brings us to a very interesting point. The amount of emotional stimulation which a given society can tolerate varies within very wide limits. There are times when the whole, or at any rate a large part of, the community will tolerate violent emotional stimulations and even deliberately seek them out. Under the influence of this excitement, difficult tasks will be accomplished and heroic acts performed. But after a certain time fatigue seems to set in; people cease to be moved by the old stimuli, cease even to wish to live heroically; their highest ambition is a quiet life, well supplied with the creature comforts. This fatigue, it should be noticed, need not be experienced by the same people as originally cultivated the fatiguing emotions. One generation lives an intensely emotional life and the next generation is tired. The community behaves as though it were a living organism, in which individuals play the part of cells. It is the organism as a whole that feels fatigue; and this fatigue communicates itself to the new cells which, in the natural course of growth, replace those originally stimulated. 'The fathers have eaten a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge.' What is the mechanism of this curious process? There is no reason to suppose that it is physiological. The children are not born tired; they become tired by psychological reaction to their parents' enthusiasm. But why do they react? Why are they not conditioned to share the enthusiasm? And why is it that when enthusiasms are not too violent there is no reaction, but acceptance on the part of the children?

To answer these questions with any precision one would have to undertake a campaign of intensive field-work and specially directed historical research. Lacking precise data, one can risk a vague generalization and say that it is impossible so to condition people that they will permanently accept a state of things that imposes an unbearable strain on their psychology; and that where such an attempt is made, the reaction to conditioning will ultimately be negative, not positive. The image of the social organism once more imposes itself: the community is a creature that can survive only when its constituent parts are in a state of equilibrium. Excessive stimulation has to be compensated by repose. The stimulated cells are one set of individuals; the reposing cells another. Why and how do the individuals of the second generation realize that a negative reaction to parental conditioning is, socially speaking, necessary? It is impossible to guess. But the fact remains that they apparently do realize it.

Periods of intense general excitement never last very long. The social organism does not seem to be able to tolerate more than about twenty years of abnormal agitation. Thus, the thrilling, heroic period of the religious revival, set going by St. Francis of Assisi, was over in less than a quarter of a century. The great animal that was Europe could not stand the strain of sitting up on its hind legs and performing primitive-Christian tricks. Within a generation it had settled down once more to a comfortable doze. Every violently exciting religious or political movement of history has run much the same course. It will be interesting to see whether the revivalist enthusiasm worked up by Communists, Nazis, and Fascists will last longer than the similar mass emotion aroused by the first Franciscans. True, the technique of propaganda is much more efficient now than it was in the Middle Ages. St. Francis had no printing-press, no radio, no cinema, no loud-speakers. Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini have them by the thousand. Nevertheless, it may be doubted whether they will really do better than St. Francis. An orchestra can make louder music than a single fiddle. But if you are tired, and bored with dancing, the orchestra will not set you capering more effectively than the fiddle. On the contrary, the very insistence of its appeal will anger you into an obstinate refusal to make the smallest answering gesture.

It should be the policy of every ruler never to allow the emotions of his subjects to be for any length of time systematically over-stimulated. Nor, if he is wise, will he ever make use of emotional over-stimulation to carry out any ambitious, long-range plan of his own. The finally negative reaction of the social organism to such over-stimulation is likely to stultify the plan and may lead at the same time to a temporary lowering of the vitality of the whole community, most undesirable and, in certain circumstances, even dangerous. The aim of the ruler should be to discover exactly the right dose of bread and circuses, and to administer just that, no more and no less. Where the dosage is correct, as it evidently was in Egypt, in Babylonia, in India, in China, a society can remain for centuries astonishingly stable, even under the stress of attack and actual conquest by alien peoples.

Ours is a world of rapidly changing techniques; education has tinged our congenital stupidity with positivism, and we are therefore impatient of faith in any kind of invisible transcendental entity. In such a world and for such a people what is the perfect dose of bread and circuses? It is hard indeed to say. But though perfection may be unattainable, it should be fairly easy to improve on the wildly incorrect and dangerous practice of the present time. The formula for permanent health is doubtless beyond us; but at least the temporary avoidance of sudden death is within our power.

We come now to the last of our questions. Can hate be used for producing unification? Or, rather, can unification be produced without using hatred? Carrera, the Indian chieftain, who ruled Guatemala from 1840 to 1860, made his first entry into the capital under a banner inscribed with these words: *Viva la religión y muerte a los extranjeros.* Uneducated, he knew by mother wit that the two most effective instruments for uniting men are a shared mythology and a shared hatred.

Carrera did not aim very high; he wanted, first of all, to unify the army of savage Indians under his command, and later, when he had achieved dictatorial power, to consolidate Guatemala into a sovereign state. His enemies, the Liberals of Salvador, were more ambitious. They aspired to unite all of Central America into a single federated republic. A more considerable task than Carrera's, for which they were equipped with less adequate instruments. For, being educated anticlericals, they could not exploit the unificatory mythology of a religion they regarded as pernicious; and being believers in progress, they could not preach hatred of the foreigners whose capital and technical knowledge they hoped to use for the development of their country. Still, some sort of unifying hatred was urgently desirable; so an attempt was made to work up patriotic feeling against England, on the score that its government had ordered the occupation of the island of Roatun in the Gulf of Honduras and was secretly planning to annex the whole of Central America. Unfortunately perhaps for Central American unity England was not planning to occupy the country. Had such an attempt actually been made, it is quite possible that the Five Republics might have been fused together by hatred of the common enemy.

Europe possesses no shared mythology, and it will obviously take some time to fabricate such an instrument of unification. A shared hatred is also lacking, but could be worked up in next to no time. There is a possibility, for example, that dislike and fear of Hitlerian Germany may result in a movement towards the unification, or at least the rational co-operation, of the other national states. If this were to happen we should have to bless the Nazis for being the unintentional benefactors of suffering humanity.

But hatred for a near neighbour easily becomes unplatonic. Almost as effective as a unifier, shared loathing for people at a distance has this further merit: it need not involve the hater in any unpleasant practical consequences. It may be that our delegates will think it worth while to unify Europe by means of hatred for Asia. Such hatred would have excellent economic justification. Combining efficiency with a lower-than-European standard of living, the Japanese can undersell us in every department; directly or indirectly, they threaten to take the bread out of innumerable European mouths. Nothing would be easier than to work up hatred for these formidable rivals; and as they live a very long way away, there is a chance that the hatred might remain, so far as most of us are concerned, relatively platonic—an excuse for collective orgies with no 'morning after' of high explosives and mustard gas.

Orgies with no morning after — paradisial vision! But meanwhile the tariff walls are raised a little higher and yet another embargo is placed on foreign goods; more bombers take the air, the new tanks do their forty miles an hour across the countryside, the heavy guns throw their shells still farther, the submarines travel ever faster, the dye-works are yet better equipped to manufacture poison gas. And the insanity is infectious. It rages in Central America as it rages in Europe. Never have the Guatemalteco soldiers been so well equipped as they are to-day. And what discipline! It seems a shame that they should have nothing to do but line the streets on ceremonial occasions. But, patience! a time will doubtless come, quite soon. . . .

*From* BEYOND THE MEXIQUE BAY

# COPAN

To the ordinary Englishman, how little the aeroplane still means! He lives as though the Wright brothers had never existed, moves and almost uninterruptedly has his being in a pre-Blériot world. When he travels it is always by train or car, over a network of rails and metalled roads. The plane is for him superfluous, an unjustifiable and slightly inconvenient luxury.

Profoundly different is the state of things in Central America. The plane has come and, quite suddenly, transformed an immemorial mode of life. There are hardly any railways in the Five Republics, and the roads are mostly mere bridle-paths. Over the greater part of the country one travelled, until very recently, as the Britons travelled before the coming of Julius Caesar. Maudslay possessed but one advantage over the Old Empire Mayas, whose ruined cities he explored—he had a horse to ride and pack-mules to carry his luggage. In Maya times his beasts of burden and his mounts would all have been bipeds. (Even under the Spanish dispensation some people preferred the human beast of burden. Stephens thus describes the mode of travel favoured by distinguished ecclesiastics in 1840. 'He set off on the back of an Indian in a *silla*, or chair with a high back and top to protect him from the sun. Three other Indians followed as relay carriers, and a noble mule for his relief if he should become tired of the chair. The Indian was bent almost double, but the *canónigo* was in high spirits, smoking his cigar, and waving his hand till he was out of sight.')

Mules, porters, mud-tracks through the jungle. . . . Then, from one day to another, people were hurtling through space in tri-motored air-liners. A long, laborious epoch of history was suppressed, and without transition men passed from a neolithic technique of transportation to the most advanced twentieth-century practice.

Measured on the map, distances in Guatemala are absurdly small. Measured by human effort and fatigue, they are enormous. Ten years ago, for example, it took you anything from twelve days to three weeks to travel from Guatemala City to Flores in the north-eastern corner of the country. You had to go down to Puerto Barrios on the Atlantic, take ship to Belize in British Honduras, paddle up the Belize river in a canoe for four, six, seven, even ten days—it depended on the amount of water that was coming down—and finish up with four or five days on a mule, riding through the jungles of Peten. Now you step into your plane at half-past ten and step out again at Flores in comfortable time for lunch.

By rail and what, by courtesy, we will call road, Copan is about four days from Guatemala City; by aeroplane, about an hour and a quarter. Unfortunately there is, for political reasons, no regular service between the two points. Copan is a village just across the frontier in Honduras. In the Five Republics the local air services are all strictly national; and Pan-American Airways, which are responsible for the long-distance international services, call only at the more important towns. The gulf dividing Copan from Guatemala City seemed therefore impassable. But an enterprising acquaintance, Dr. Harris, the American biologist, had discovered that the journey could be made. True, no pilot from Guatemala had ever landed at Copan; but it was reported to possess a flying-field. A plane could be chartered from the local company, and, armed with the necessary visas, vaccination certificates, flying permits, and what not, we could drop down into the neighbouring republic, look at the ruins, and be back, if necessary, in time for lunch.

The theory of nationalism is one of the grandest labour-creating devices ever invented. To fly from point A to another point B a hundred miles away is, physically, a simple matter. But if the two points lie on opposite sides of a national boundary, how difficult the business at once becomes! The theory of nationalism makes it necessary for each state to create huge, expensive organizations, whose function is, first to prevent and then, at a price and under absurd conditions, to allow, the performance of such physically simple acts as flying from A to B. And how much time and trouble must be wasted by innocent individuals in circumventing the obstacles which are so carefully put in their way! A mitigation of nationalism would save the world millions of hours of wasted time and an incalculable expense of spirit, physical energy, and money.

To the rare travellers who visit these far-away countries of Central America, the resident diplomats show a boundless kindness. Mr. Lee, the British consul and acting minister, wrote me a letter of recommendation so glowing that, when at last I found the Honduranean minister, he gave me all the necessary visas at once and—what I thought uncommonly handsome—free of all charge. I was grateful; and would have been a good deal more grateful if I had not had to make about four blisteringly hot journeys to his legation before finding him at home. Meanwhile, the officials of the aeroplane company had not been idle. Through the Guatemalan Foreign Office they had approached the Honduranean Foreign Office at Tegucigalpa; the Honduranean Foreign Office had communicated with the Honduranean Ministry of War; and after due consideration it had been decided that the safety of the state would not be seriously imperilled by our visit to Copan. Telegraphically, we were authorized to go. The arranging of our little trip had consumed about six man-hours of valuable official time and about as many of (I flatter myself) still more valuable unofficial time.

The sun had just risen when we took off from the air-port of Guatemala. We climbed into a flawless sky, but down in the valleys the mist lay impenetrably white. There was sunlight only above four thousand feet. The mountains were islands, and here and there the cone of a volcano rose like Stromboli from the level expanse of that shining sea. We flew on. The valley of the Motagua wound away beneath us, a fjord between mountains. In the interminable and meaningless wilderness of peaks and *barrancas* and volcanoes, it was the only clear and significant geographical feature.

Time passed; we were approaching our destination. Somewhere below us lay the ruins. But where? Which of these narrow rivers of white mist was the valley of Copan? There was nothing for it but to go down and look. Three times our pilot swooped down out of the blue—two thousand feet of steep and sickening descent—down into the fog between the closely crowding mountains. But there was nothing to be seen and after the third attempt he turned back. Twenty minutes away, in Guatemalan territory, was the landing-field of Esquipulas—a plateau lying high enough to be free of mist. We landed. In an hour the sun would have scoured the lowest valleys and we could start again.

Esquipulas is the home of a Black Christ of such extraordinary sanctity that every January pilgrims came, and still come, from enormous distances to worship at his shrine. It seems that in the eyes of all the aboriginal American races, black is traditionally a sacred colour; so that what draws the worshippers from as far as Mexico in the north, and as Ecuador in the south, and even as Peru, is probably less the saintliness of the historic Jesus than the magical sootiness of his image. With us, black is symbolical only of grief. The black uniform of our clergy is a kind of chronic mourning that is meant, I suppose, to testify to the essential *sérieux* of their official character. It has no magical significance; for on all ceremonial occasions it is discarded for a praying costume of white linen, or of cloth of gold, or of gaudily embroidered silk. But though black is not with us a sacred colour, black images of exceeding holiness are none the less fairly common in Europe. The reason, I suspect, is that such statues have a somewhat sinister appearance. (The Holy Face of Lucca is very nearly black and, with its glittering jewelled eyes, is one of the strangest and most terrifying sculptures ever made.) In Otto's terminology, black idols are intrinsically more 'numinous' than white. Numinosity is in inverse ratio to luminosity.

Most regrettably we were unable to see the image. The village of Esquipulas stands some two or three miles from the landing-field, and to have walked there and back would have taken too long. Our pilot was anxious to reach Copan as soon as possible, so that we could get away again before the afternoon wind sprang up and made starting difficult. We had to content ourselves with a distant bird's-eye view of the huge white church, towering high above the almost invisible huts of its attendant village, a landmark in the wilderness.

An hour passed; the sun was already high in the sky and very hot. We climbed into the plane again and started off. The mist had all melted away and, in a little while, there below us, clear as a map, was the valley of Copan, narrow between hills, with its village, its fields of dust-coloured stubble, its winding river, its tree-grown Maya acropolis rising sheer in a great wall from the water's edge. We came spiralling down. A small bald patch not far from the ruins was evidently the landing-field. A herd of cows scattered in hysterical agitation as we descended. Avoiding these animals as best he could, and steering clear of the larger of the numerous rocks with which the air-port was strewn, our pilot, who was fortunately a most skilful flyer, brought us safely to land. We stepped out and, accompanied by some small boys who offered to be our guides, walked off to see the ruins. Our pilot took the road to the village; the local authorities would be anxious, he knew, to prove their importance by lengthily examining his papers. If he did not indulge them, they might turn savage.

Time and its allies in destruction, vegetation and weather, play curious tricks on the works of man. A city left to their tender mercies is generally destroyed as an architectural and engineering whole, but spared in its decorative details. The great masses of masonry are buried and disrupted; tend, if the vegetation is strong, to vanish altogether, dissolved into their component parts; the statues, the reliefs, the fragile pots, and jewels survive, very often, almost intact. At Copan, for example, a few mounds covered with trees, a wall here and there, some rubbish heaps of tumbled stones, are all that remain of the great complex of pyramids, of platforms, of walls and terraces, of sunken courtyards, which once occupied the site. Buried and, under the mould, disintegrated by the thrusting roots of the tropical vegetation, a sacred city of pure geometrical forms once stood here. Its sharp-edged planes of hewn stone, of white or painted stucco, shone smooth, like the surfaces of a crystal, in the perpendicular sunlight. But toiling up and down through the scrub, among the fallen stones, I found it all but impossible to reconstruct in my imagination the Mayas' huge embodiment of a mathematician's dream. I had read the writings of the archaeologists and knew what sort of monument had been raised at Copan. But these almost shapeless barrows supplied my fancy with no visible foundations on which to rebuild the Mayas' prodigious works. Only the plastic decorations with which their mountains of solid geometry had been incidentally trimmed were still there, in unequivocal existence, before my eyes. The whole had gone; but a few of the ornamental parts remained. In a maize-field at the foot of the wooded mounds—the mounds were the acropolis and principal pyramid, the maize-field had been a great forum—stood a group of magnificent stelae, floridly carved in such deep relief that the stone was sometimes pierced from side to side. Using neolithic tools, the Maya sculptors had displayed an almost contemptuous mastery of their material; they had treated their twenty-foot monoliths as a Chinese craftsman might treat a piece of ivory. One is left bewildered by the spectacle of so much technical accomplishment displayed by people having such inadequate technical resources.

The stelae are not Copan's only monuments. Scrambling among the ruins, we found an astonishing wealth of carved stones. Here was a great cubic skull-symbol, its eye sockets glaring, its teeth deep in the grass and weeds; here, at the base of a broken wall, a dado of small death's-heads in low relief; here the famous altar with its frieze of fantastically adorned astronomer-priests in scientific conference; here, carved in the round, a giant's head, grotesquely open-mouthed; here a pair of statues, broken, but still violently alive. The finest specimens of sculpture in the round are no longer at Copan. I saw nothing to compare in grace, in plastic subtlety, in emotional expressiveness, with the torso of the maize god at the British Museum, or with the lovely head of the same god now at Boston. These two pieces and certain others in American museums, are stylistically so close to one another that one is tempted to think of them as the works of a single sculptor of outstanding ability. Of the other carvings in the round still at Copan, none exhibited the kind of approach to reality exemplified in these extraordinary statues. The beauty of most Mayan sculpture is felt by us to be profoundly, incommensurably alien. But with this particular group of carvings from Copan one feels suddenly at home, on familiar emotional ground. The mind of the man, or men, who made them seems to have been gifted with the same kind of sensibilities as ours. Now that these works have been taken away, the European visitor to Copan enjoys no such comforting conviction. He looks at the astonishing works around him, but looks at them from across a gulf; they exist in a universe of sentiment and discourse that is not his universe. Those colossal skulls, for example—they have nothing to do with the macabre of our later middle ages, or the florid horrors of baroque sepulchral art.

> The flesh is bruckle, the fiend is slee,
> *Timor mortis conturbat me.*

So wailed our ancestors. But I doubt if the Mayas were saying anything of the kind. In these great cubic monoliths, adorned (with what an unerring sense of the significantly decorative effect!) with eye sockets, nose hole, teeth, one finds no trace of our European lament for transience, our personal terror of extinction and decay. One finds—what? Confronted by the extraordinary objects themselves one can only ask the question, not hope to answer it. It is impossible to know by personal experience what the people who made such things felt and thought. Each life has its own private logic, and the logics of all the lives of people living at a given time, under a given cultural dispensation, have, at some point, a certain resemblance among themselves. The Mayas' life-logic was not the same as ours. The admiration with which we look at their works of art is tinged with a speculative incomprehension. What were they really up to? *Quien sabe?*

We came back from the ruins to find the entire population of Copan clustered round our aeroplane, like a crowd of Breughel's peasants round a crucifixion. Some were standing; some, with the air of people who had come out for a long day's pleasure, were sitting in the shade of our wings and picnicking. They were a villainous set of men and women; not Indian, but low *ladino,* squalid and dirty as only a poverty-stricken half-caste, with a touch of white blood and a sense of superiority to all the traditional decencies of the inferior race, can be dirty and squalid. Before the door of the cabin stood half a dozen ruffians, looking like the Second Murderers of Elizabethan drama, and armed with genuinely antique muskets of the American Civil War pattern. The local police. We were criminals.

It was, of course, our old friend nationalism at work once more, creating labour and discomfort with a punctual fidelity—creating also, it must be admitted, a great deal of gratuitous amusement for the inhabitants of Copan. Our licence to land at Copan had been issued by the central authorities in Tegucigalpa. But the central authorities had omitted to tell the local authorities of what they had done; so that when we dropped out of the blue, our arrival must have had, for the *alcalde* of Copan and the General in charge of the department, to whom he had immediately telegraphed, all the exciting characteristics of an unprovoked outrage, a wanton picce of Guatemalan sabre-rattling. '*Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!*' The Copanese had responded manfully to the call. Those Second Murderers, with their muskets, offensively refusing to allow us to sit in the cabin of our own aeroplane, were animated, I am sure, by the purest patriotism.

The hours passed; it grew hotter and hotter. Our pilot had telegraphed to Guatemala; but goodness only knew how long it would take for the telegram to produce any effect in Copan. I began to wonder uncomfortably whether we should have to spend the night behind the bars of the local prison, in intimate companionship with the local bugs, ticks, lice, and fleas. But happily, half-way through the afternoon, deliverance came. On the receipt of our telegram the aeroplane company had appealed to the Guatemalan Foreign Office, and the Guatemalan Foreign Office, justly indignant, had telegraphed to

Tegucigalpa, and Tegucigalpa had telegraphed to the General at the head of the department, and the General had telegraphed to the *alcalde* of Copan. There was nothing for it but to let us go. With obvious reluctance the Copanese prepared to obey the orders from above. But, as though he could not bear to be deprived so soon of the exquisite pleasure of being offensive to his betters, the young man in charge of the Second Murderers insisted on having yet one more look at our passports, and kept them a quarter of an hour, while he copied down all the names he could find, from our own to those of the Foreign Secretaries by whom the passports had been issued. Then, when there was really nothing more he could do to annoy us, he called away his men. We climbed into the cabin; the pilot started up his engines and, after having paid—the final outrage—fifteen dollars for the use of the landing-field, and a dollar a head for the privilege of photographing the ruins, shut the door behind us and prepared to take off.

A field not more than three hundred yards long, strewn with rocks and infested with cows; at the end of it a river, with mountains rising steeply from the farther bank. . . . Ignorance is bliss; but even I could see that this was not the ideal taking-off place for an aeroplane. Our pilot, however, knew his job superbly well, and the plane was powerfully engined. We left the stony field in an astonishingly short space of time, wheeled round to avoid the rising ground beyond the river, and, cork-screwing up, were soon in the open sky a thousand feet above the mountains. Little more than an hour later we were in Guatemala.

'They told me,' said the pilot, as we walked towards the waiting car, 'that this was the second ship that ever landed at Copan.' He paused to light a cigarette. 'Well, so far as I 'm concerned,' he went on, 'it 's the last.'

Copan is one vast monument to the Mayas' extraordinary preoccupation with time. Each stela marks the close of one of the shorter of the chronological periods, in terms of which they reckoned their position in endless duration—the close of a Katun of 7,200 days or, more often, of a half- or quarter-Katun. The temples, the pyramids, the stairways were erected and then enlarged to celebrate the lapse of other significant spans of time. Of the hieroglyphs carved on monolith and staircase wall, those that can still be read are but the elaborate record of dates; and of the rest many, if decipherable, would probably refer to astronomical occurrences, such as eclipses and the conjunctions of planets. Time was evidently at the very heart of the Maya religion. To grasp time intellectually seems to have been the first duty of the initiated few. The uneducated masses could only passively accept the results of the priestly labours. It was their simple and exciting duty to rejoice in ceremonial unison when propitious seasons came round, to lament during the unlucky days, to express their terror at the critical close of some mysteriously significant period, to perform propitiatory rites against the coming of the predicted eclipse. Their relations with time were fundamentally emotional; those of the priests, intellectual.

At a certain level of consciousness, time inevitably becomes a preoccupation. Men are aware of the flux and of themselves within it. They may see themselves at rest in the current, at rest but doomed unceasingly to draw the potential into the actual, to go on drawing it until at last they draw the potentiality of death and, with its actualization, can draw no more. Or else, in their imagination, they are being swept along on the knife-edge of the present, between an unknowable future and a less and less known past, headlong towards a certain catastrophe. The first was the medieval conception of time, the second is Galileo's, Newton's, and (except in the mathematician's study) ours. Both conceptions are equally depressing. Indeed, any possible conception of time must be depressing. For any possible conception of time entails the recognition and intimate realization of the flux of perpetual perishing; and to be made aware of the flux—the flux in relation to one's own being; worse, as a treacherous and destructive element of that being—is intolerable. Regular, one, undifferentiated, time goes sliding on beneath and through all life, beneath and through its various pains and pleasures, its boredoms and enlightenments, and seemingly timeless ecstasies—always the same mysterious dark lapse into nothing. The realization of it is, I repeat, intolerable. Not to be borne.

And, in fact, men refuse to bear it. Their method of escape is simple and consists in taking away from time the qualities they find unbearable and in giving it other qualities of a less distressing kind.

The endless continuity of time is appalling; arbitrarily, therefore, men parcel up the flux into sections. It is always and everywhere horribly the same; they impose imaginary differentiations and plant little landmarks of their own devising. The current flows implacably on, forthright and irreversible; in their imagination, they distort it into a circular or at least a spiral movement with periodical returns to an identity. Time is unbearable. To make it bearable, men transform it into something that is not time, something that has the qualities of space. For we feel at home in space—at any rate, in the comfortable little space that belongs to this planet and in which we have our daily being. But in time, in the undifferentiated flux of perpetual perishing, we can never feel at home. Time therefore must be transformed, so far as our capacities for make-believe will allow of it, into space.

How shall time be spatialized? Nature gives the first hint. The heavenly bodies march about the sky, and their marching is time made visible. The seasons recur, night and day recur, hunger and desire and sleep recur. It seems natural, therefore, to conceive of time as a series of circles—little round day, large round month, huge round year. On this natural system of spatialization men have grafted all kinds of arbitrary systems of their own. The rim of the year is studded with periodical festivals which serve to break up and differentiate the flux—to emphasize, by their regular recurrence, the essentially circular nature of the movement of spatialized time.

But this is not all. Between the round day and the round month they have slipped an intermediate round, the week, varying in size, at different times and in different places, from a circle three days in circumference to one of eight or ten. Sometimes circles are inserted between month and year. The Mayas, for example, had a sacred 'year' of two hundred and sixty days, which went round and round in independence of the solar year. Similarly the Christians and the Moslems preserve within the solar framework a sacred lunar year, in terms of which Easter and Ramadan are dated.

The solar year is the largest of the natural circles. But man, being a long-lived animal, with an imagination capable of conceiving enormous durations, requires larger units. In a long period of time a year sinks into insignificance, becomes a mere dot, and finally vanishes out of consciousness, so that time is once more realized as a continuous and undifferentiated flux. Larger units have to be invented, in order that it may be possible to think of vast durations as composed of space-like fragments, of successive circles spiralling round a recognizable identity. By way of illustration I will cite only a few Central American examples. Thus, the Mayas and the Aztecs had a sacred fifty-two-year period, the conclusion of which was regarded as a potential world-ending and had to be celebrated with the most elaborate ritual. When reckoning dates, the Mayas ordinarily made use of a cycle of 144,000 days. It is probable that they also employed larger units—a Great-Cycle of 2,880,000 days, perhaps a Great-Great-Cycle of 57,600,000 days, and even, as Professor Morley thinks, a Great-Great-Great-Great-Cycle of more than 1,800,000,000 days. This last is an astonishingly large unit, and its use would indicate that the Mayas had an imaginative grasp of duration unparalleled until modern times. Indefinitely long durations can be reduced to something space-like only by the use of very large units. Many peoples—and among them very intelligent peoples like the Greeks—seem never to have been obsessed by the thought of indefinite duration, and therefore never to have felt the need for large time units, or indeed for any elaborately space-like calendarial construction whatsoever. Greek chronology before the time of Eratosthenes in the third century B.C. is absurdly inadequate, and the primitive ingenuousness of the Greek conception of time is well illustrated by the story that Herodotus tells of Hecataeus, the historian. Discoursing of his ancestry to the priests of Thebes in Egypt, Hecataeus 'traced his descent to a god in the person of his sixteenth ancestor'; whereupon the priests 'did to him exactly as they afterwards did to me, though I made no boast of my family. They took me into the inner sanctuary . . . and showed me a multitude of colossal statues in wood . . . the custom being for every high priest during his lifetime to set up his statue in the temple. . . . Their colossal figures were each, they said, a Pirômis, born of a Pirômis, and the number of them was three hundred and forty-five.' People who could imagine that the essential quality of existence could be radically changed within sixteen generations can never have been seriously bothered with the horrible idea of indefinite duration. The Greeks were, of course, acutely aware of short-term duration and bewailed the transience of youth, pleasure, life itself, with a rare eloquence. Like every one else, they felt the need to turn this short-term duration into the comforting likeness of space. To this end they employed the usual recurrent units, both natural and arbitrary, within the year, and encrusted the circle of the year itself with the usual festivals. Of larger units they also possessed a few—but almost all of very modest proportions: four-year Olympiads, nine-year renewals of Spartan kingship, the eight-year period within which the lunar was adjusted to the solar calendar—and so on. Meton's 'Great Year' of nineteen solar years and Hipparchus's 304-year period were never generally accepted as units of time. As for the enormous time units employed by the Mayas, no Greek even dreamt of using such things. For the good reason, I imagine, that none, as it happened, had ever urgently felt the need of spatializing indefinite duration. What causes a people, or at any rate the thinking part of a people, to become as acutely time-conscious as the priestly mathematicians of the Maya Old Empire? Not geography, not economics, not a high average of general intelligence. Rather a series of personal accidents. A man is born to whom, for whatever reason, time is an obsession. It also happens that he possesses the kind of abilities which enable him to solve his problem—the problem of the intellectual mastery and transformation of time—in comprehensible quantitative terms. Furthermore, as luck will have it, he is in a position to influence his fellows, to find colleagues, to make disciples. A tradition is formed, a technique and an intellectual discipline perfected; it becomes 'natural' for succeeding thinkers to turn their attention to time and the processes of spatializing it in terms of mathematics. But where the suitable philosophical tradition has never been established, and where no technique for thinking effectively about time exists, it is equally 'natural' that even quite accomplished philosophers and mathematicians should ignore the subject.

Time can be spatialized in other terms than those of mathematics. There are artistic techniques for differentiating the undifferentiated, for parcelling up the continuous flux, for bending an irreversible current into the semblance of a circle. There is also a religious technique for abolishing time in favour of an eternal present. Nor must we forget those biological and social devices for dulling men's awareness of the flux—habit and its social equivalent, routine.

Habit and routine are artificial circular movements superimposed on the natural circles of our physiological functioning. Thus, there are natural circles of eating, sleeping, excretion, and so forth; and, intersecting them, the circles of our 'second nature'—circles of work, circles of habitual thought, circles of conditioned feeling, circles of automatically repeated gestures.

Habit and routine are in part or wholly subliminal; the arts, on the contrary, are activities of full consciousness. Music, poetry, and the dance provide methods for spatializing time on the highest plane of awareness. The basic material is in each case time, which is taken raw, so to speak, as mere duration, and transformed, by means of rhythm and repetition, into a pattern composed of qualitatively different parts and involving circular returns to an identity. For as long as it takes the music to be played, the poem to be read, the dance to be trodden out, the transmutation of time into space is as complete as it is possible, in the nature of things, for such a transmutation to be. And the effect is in some degree an enduring one. A mind impregnated with music will always tend to impose a pattern on the temporal flux.

Religion makes use of every possible device for rendering duration humanly acceptable. It takes the calendar and, by means of its feasts and ceremonials, gives it an emotional as well as an intellectual significance. It exploits the time-transmuting arts of music, poetry, and the dance. And finally it inculcates a philosophy, disparaging time in favour of eternity and, along with the philosophy, a practical technique for directly experiencing eternity. Of time and eternity, Henry Vaughan wrote that:

> I saw Eternity the other night,
> Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
>   All calm as it was bright;
> And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years
>   Driven by the spheres,
> Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
>   And all her train were hurled.

For all its beauty, the imagery is inappropriate. Eternity is an everlasting present. It is duration spatialized, not as a ring, but as a glowing point. Moreover, the time that Vaughan perceived 'moving round like a vast shadow' was not real time (for real time is an irreversible current for ever streaming in one direction); it was the acceptably spatialized, circular duration of the calendar-makers. Vaughan makes the mistake of speaking too well of time and not well enough of eternity.

That time is somehow an illusion and eternity the only reality is a doctrine common to most of the great philosophical systems of Indian and European antiquity. But even if true—and personally I should like it to be true—the doctrine is not very efficacious against the obsessive consciousness of duration. For an illusion which is shared by all living beings, at any rate on our planet, is for all practical purposes indistinguishable from a reality. This being so, all the major religions have supplemented their theoretical disparagements of time with technical education in the art of escaping from time. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism—all have their systems of mental and physical gymnastics for the production of ecstasy, which is the present experience of eternity. In the mind of the chronologist, the musician, the common creature of habit and routine, time has been transformed, by a variety of different processes, into the likeness of a circle. The mystic goes one further and contracts the circle to a point. The whole of existence is reduced for him to *here, now.* Time has been spatialized to its extreme limit. But, alas, when he emerges from his ecstasy, he finds the current still flowing—realizes that it has been flowing even while he imagined that he had altogether abolished it. The flux may be an illusion, but it is an illusion always and unescapably there.

*From* BEYOND THE MEXIQUE BAY

# ESSAYS

# TIBET

In moments of complete despair, when it seems that all is for the worst in the worst of all possible worlds, it is cheering to discover that there are places where stupidity reigns even more despotically than in Western Europe, where civilization is based on principles even more fantastically unreasonable. Recent experience has shown me that the depression into which the Peace, Mr. Churchill, the state of contemporary literature, have conspired to plunge the mind, can be sensibly relieved by a study, even superficial, of the manners and customs of Tibet. The spectacle of an ancient and elaborate civilization of which almost no detail is not entirely idiotic is in the highest degree comforting and refreshing. It fills us with hopes of the ultimate success of our own civilization; it restores our wavering self-satisfaction in being citizens of industrialized Europe. Compared with Tibet, we are prodigious. Let us cherish the comparison.

My informant about Tibetan civilization is a certain Japanese monk of the name of Kawaguchi, who spent three years in Tibet at the beginning of the present century. His account of the experience has been translated into English, and published, with the title *Three Years in Tibet*, by the Theosophical Society. It is one of the great travel books of the world, and, so far as I am aware, the most interesting book on Tibet that exists. Kawaguchi enjoyed opportunities in Tibet which no European traveller could possibly have had. He attended the University of Lhasa, he enjoyed the acquaintance of the Dalai Lama himself, he was intimate with one of the four Ministers of Finance, he was the friend of lama and layman, of all sorts and conditions of Tibetans, from the highest class to the lowest—the despicable caste of smiths and butchers. He knew his Tibet intimately; for those three years, indeed, he was for all practical purposes a Tibetan. This is something which no European explorer can claim, and it is this which gives Kawaguchi's book its unique interest.

The Japanese, like people of every other nationality except the Chinese, are not permitted to enter Tibet. Mr. Kawaguchi did not allow this to stand in the way of his pious mission—for his purpose in visiting Tibet was to investigate the Buddhist writings and traditions of the place. He made his way to India, and in a long stay at Darjeeling familiarized himself with the Tibetan language. He then set out to walk across the Himalayas. Not daring to affront the strictly guarded gates which bar the direct route to Lhasa, he penetrated Tibet at its south-western corner, underwent prodigious hardships in an uninhabited desert eighteen thousand feet above sea-level, visited the holy lake of Manosarovara, and finally, after astonishing adventures, arrived in Lhasa. Here he lived for nearly three years, passing himself off as a Chinaman. At the end of that time his secret leaked out, and he was obliged to accelerate his departure for India. So much for Kawaguchi himself, though I should have liked to say more of him; for a more charming and sympathetic character never revealed himself in a book.

Tibet is so full of fantastic low comedy that one hardly knows where to begin a catalogue of its absurdities. Shall we start with the Tibetans' highly organized service of trained nurses, whose sole duty it is to prevent their patients from going to sleep? Or with the Dalai Lama's chief source of income—the sale of pills made of dung, at, literally, a guinea a box? Or with the Tibetan custom of never washing from the moment of birth, when, however, they are plentifully anointed with melted butter, to the moment of death? And then there is the University of Lhasa, which an eminent Cambridge philosopher has compared with the University of Oxford—somewhat unjustly, perhaps; but let that pass. At the University of Lhasa the student is instructed in logic and philosophy; every year of his stay he has to learn by heart from one to five or six hundred pages of holy texts. He is also taught mathematics, but in Tibet this art is not carried farther than subtraction. It takes twenty years to get a degree at the University of Lhasa—twenty years, and then most of the candidates are ploughed. To obtain a superior Ph.D. degree, entitling one to become a really holy and eminent lama, forty years of application to study and to virtue are required. But it is useless to try to make a catalogue of the delights of Tibet. There are too many of them for mention in this small space. One can do no more than glance at a few of the brighter spots in the system.

There is much to be said for the Tibetan system of taxation. The Government requires a considerable revenue; for enormous sums have to be spent in keeping perpetually burning in the principal Buddhist cathedral of Lhasa an innumerable army of lamps, which may not be fed with anything cheaper than clarified yak butter. This is the heaviest item of expenditure. But a great deal of money also goes to supporting the Tibetan clergy, who must number at least a sixth of the total population. The money is raised by a poll tax, paid in kind, the amount of which, fixed by ancient tradition, may, theoretically, never be altered. Theoretically only; for the Tibetan Government employs in the collection of taxes no fewer than twenty different standards of weight and thirty-six different standards of measure. The pound may weigh anything from half to a pound and a half; and the same with the units of measure. It is thus possible to calculate with extraordinary nicety, according to the standard of weight and measure in which your tax is assessed, where precisely you stand in the Government's favour. If you are a notoriously bad character, or even if you are innocent, but live in a bad district, your tax will have to be paid in measures of the largest size. If you are virtuous, or, better, if you are rich, of good family and *bien pensant*, then you will pay by weights which are only half the nominal weight. For those whom the Government neither hates nor loves, but regards with more or less contempt or tolerance, there are the thirty-four intervening degrees.

Kawaguchi's final judgment of the Tibetans, after three years' intimate acquaintance with them, is not a flattering one:

> The Tibetans are characterized by four serious defects, these being: filthiness, superstition, unnatural customs (such as polyandry), and unnatural art. I should be sorely perplexed if I were asked to name their redeeming points; but if I had to do so, I should mention first of all the fine climate in the vicinity of Lhasa and Shigatze, their sonorous and refreshing voices in reading the Text, the animated style of their catechisms, and their ancient art.

Certainly a bad lot of vices; but then the Tibetan virtues are not lightly to be set aside. We English possess none of them: our climate is abominable, our method of reading the holy texts is painful in the extreme, our catechisms, at least in my young days, were far from animated, and our ancient art is very indifferent stuff. But still, in spite of these defects, in spite of Mr. Churchill and the state of contemporary literature, we can still look at the Tibetans and feel reassured.

*From* ON THE MARGIN (1923)

# THE SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION

## THE UNCHANGING FOUNDATIONS

THE horses and bisons on the walls of the palaeolithic cave-man's dwelling might have been painted by an artist of the twentieth century—that is, if there were any contemporary artists with sufficient talent to paint them. The earliest surviving literatures are still entirely comprehensible. And though the earliest philosophies and religions may seem intellectually very remote from ourselves, we feel, none the less, that the emotions and intuitions to which they give rational, or pseudo-rational, expression are recognizably akin to our own. Rationalizations change, and with them the rules of conduct based upon rationalizations. But what is rationalized does not change. At most a latent power is developed; the potential is made actual; a technique is discovered for realizing and exploiting faculties hitherto useless and unrealized. In their likenesses and unlikenesses the men of to-day resemble the men of the past. There were introverts and extroverts in the time of Homer, intellectuals and intuitives, visualizers and non-visualizers, just as there are now. And in all probability the relative numbers of individuals belonging to the various types have remained more or less constant throughout history. Neither the hereditary differences between men, nor the similarities, have greatly varied. What has varied has been the vehicles of thought and action by means of which the hereditarily constant differences and similarities have been expressed. The form of institutions and philosophies may change; but the substance that underlies them remains indestructible, because the nature of humanity remains unaltered.

## THE DECAY OF RELIGION

The case of religion might seem, at a first glance, to disprove this statement. During the last two or three hundred years the religions of the West have manifestly decayed. There have been ups, it is true, as well as downs; but the downward movement has predominated, with the result that we are living to-day in what is probably the most irreligious epoch of all history. And yet religion is the rationalization of feelings and intuitions which we have just assumed to be substantially unchangeable. Is the assumption wrong, and has our nature radically altered, during the past few generations? Alternatively, must we believe that religion is not the rationalization of deep-seated feelings and intuitions, but a mere fantastical whimsy, invented and re-invented by every generation for its own amusement? The dilemma is apparent, not real. The fact that religions have decayed during the past few generations does not mean that they are definitively dead. And the fact that many people are now without a religion does not mean that they are without some substitute for a religion; their religious feelings and intuitions may be rationalized in forms not immediately recognizable as religious.

That whole classes of mental functions and faculties may fall into temporary disrepute is abundantly evidenced by history, which makes it no less clear that the attempt to suppress a part of the being, to live without it, as though it did not exist, is never permanently successful. Sooner or later the outlawed elements take their revenge, the order of their banishment is rescinded, and a new philosophy of life becomes popular—a philosophy which gives to previously despised and outlawed elements their due place in the scheme of things, and often, in the heat of reaction, more than their due place. There is no reason to believe that the present condition of irreligion is a permanent one. The partially educated masses, it is true, have just discovered, some forty years behind the time, the materialism of nineteenth-century science. But the scientific men, it is significant to note, are rapidly abandoning the materialistic position. What they think now, the masses will doubtless be thinking a generation hence.

The decay of religion is not only in all probability temporary; it is also incomplete. The religious instincts of those who have no recognized religion (I leave out of account the still considerable and growing numbers of those who have) find expression in a surprising variety of non-religious ways. Lacking religion, they have provided themselves with substitutes for it. It is of these surrogates that I now propose to write.

### NATURE OF THE GENUINE ARTICLE

The surrogates of a thing cannot be intelligently discussed unless something is known about the nature of the genuine article. Only someone who has tasted butter can criticize the different brands of margarine. It is the same with the substitutes for religion. Unless we start with some preliminary idea of the nature of religion, we shall be unable to recognize, much less evaluate, its substitutes.

I shall not attempt to give a formal definition of religion. Such definitions are mostly so vague and abstract as to be almost meaningless. What is required for our purposes is not a definition of religion so much as a catalogue of the principal states of mind and actions recognized as religious, together with a brief account of the most characteristic features of the religious doctrines which are the rationalizations of these states and acts.

A sense of awe in face of the mysteries and immensities of the world—this, I suppose, is the most fundamental religious state of mind. This feeling is rationalized in the form of belief in supernatural beings, both kindly and malevolent, as is the world in which men live. In the higher religions the rationalization is very elaborate and constitutes an account, complete and coherent, of the whole universe.

The religious feeling finds its active as opposed to its intellectual expression in the form of propitiatory ritual. Ritual, as soon as it is invented, occupies a place of prime importance in all religions. For the rite evokes by association those emotions of awe which are, for the individual who feels them, the god himself. And these emotions are accompanied by others no less exhilarating, and therefore no less divine. Chief among these is what may be called the social emotion, the feeling of excitement caused by being in a crowd.

Asceticism is common to all religions. It is unnecessary to try to explain why men should have believed that they could win the favours of the gods by abstaining from pleasure and comfort. The fact that they have done so is enough for us.

Human misery is so great and so widespread that one of the principal functions of religion has been that of consolation, and one of the most typical religious doctrines is that of future compensatory states.

Absoluteness is a quality typical of religious beliefs. Religious doctrines are held with a passionate tenacity. If what is believed is absolutely true, then it is of vital importance that the believer should cling to his belief and refuse to admit the contrary beliefs of others. Conversely, absoluteness of belief, resulting from whatever cause, tends to create a certainty of the absolute reality of the thing believed in. The quality of the faith is transferred to its object, which thereby becomes absolute and consequently worthy of worship.

All religions have priests, who fulfil a double function. They are, in the first place, to use M. Paul Valéry's expressive phrase, *les préposés aux choses vagues*—mediators between man and the surrounding mystery, which they understand and can propitiate more effectually than ordinary folk. Their second function is earthly; they are confessors, advisers, casuists, spiritual doctors; at certain periods they have also been rulers.

Such are a few of the most obviously significant facts about religion. With these in mind, we may proceed to consider its substitutes. The first thing that strikes us is, that none of the substitutes is more than very partially adequate. A religion covers all the intellectual and emotional ground. It offers an explanation of the universe, it consoles, it provides its devotees with uplifting, god-creating rites. No substitute can do as much; one offers rites, but not philosophy; another compensatory doctrines, but no rites. And so on. No religious surrogate can completely satisfy all the religious needs of men. Much of the restlessness and uncertainty so characteristic of our time is probably due to the chronic sense of unappeased desires from which men naturally religious, but condemned by circumstances to have no religion, are bound to suffer.

## THE POLITICAL SURROGATE

Perhaps the most important substitute for religion is politics. Extreme nationalism presents its devotees with a god to be worshipped—the Country—together with much inspiring ritual of a mainly military kind. In most countries and for most of their inhabitants nationalism is a spasmodic faith, of which the believers are only occasionally conscious. But where the state is weak and in danger, where men are oppressed by a foreign ruler, it becomes an unflagging enthusiasm. Even in countries where there is no sense of inferiority to be compensated, where there are no immediate dangers and no oppressors, the nationalist substitute for religion is often continuously inspiring. I have met some few admirable men and women for whom unlike

Nurse Cavell, patriotism was quite enough. The country was to be served and worshipped. They asked, as far as I could discover, for no other god. The only universe of which they demanded an explanation was the universe of politics. And with what a simple, unpretentious explanation even of that they were contented!

Extreme democracy has as many devotees as extreme nationalism; and among those devotees there are probably more chronic enthusiasts than are to be found among the patriots. As a substitute for religion, extreme democracy is more adequate than nationalism; for it covers more ground, at any rate as a doctrine. For revolutionary democracy is a forward-looking faith. It preaches a future state—in this world, not another—when all the injustices of the present will be remedied, all the unhappinesses compensated, when the first shall be last and the last first, and there shall be crowns for all and no more weeping, and practically no more work. Moreover, it is susceptible of a much more thorough philosophical treatment than nationalism. 'My country right or wrong' is a sentiment which cannot be completely rationalized. The only reason that any man has for loving and serving his country is the mere accident that it happens to be his. He knows that if he had been born somewhere else the object of his worship would have been different. Not the bulldog, but the cock or the eagle would have been his totem. Not Dr. Arne, but Haydn or Rouget de Lisle, would have hymned him into ecstasy. There can be no metaphysic of patriotism; it is just a raw, unalterable fact, which must be accepted as it is. Democracy, on the other hand, does not vary from country to country; it is a universal and imperishable doctrine—for the poor are everywhere and at all times with us. The raw facts of misery, envy, and discontent can be rationalized in the most thorough-going fashion. To explain and justify the very natural desire of the poor and oppressed for freedom, wealth, and power a far-reaching system of metaphysics has been evolved. The Christian doctrines of original sin and divine grace have been denied, and all the virtues and perfections of God have been lodged in humanity—not indeed as it is now (that would be too hard to swallow), but as it will be when freed from oppression and enlightened by education. This doctrine, although manifestly false, is a genuine religious explanation of the world, in terms of which it is possible, with a little judicious manipulation, to explain all the facts of human life.

Doctrinally, then, revolutionary democracy is an excellent substitute for religion. When it comes to practice, however, it is less satisfying than nationalism. For nationalism has a traditional and highly elaborate ritual of its own. Revolutionary democracy can offer nothing to compare with the royal processions, the military parades, the music pregnant with associations, the flags, the innumerable emblems, by means of which patriotic sentiment can be worked up and the real presence of the motherland made manifest to every beholder.

## Ritual

The craving for ritual and ceremony is strong and widespread. How strong and how widely spread is shown by the eagerness with which men and women who have no religion, or a puritanical religion without ritual, will seize at any opportunity to participate in ceremonies of whatever kind. The Ku-Klux-Klan would never have achieved its post-War success if it had stuck to plain clothes and committee meetings. Messrs. Simmons and Clark, the resuscitators of that remarkable body, understood their public. They insisted on strange nocturnal ceremonies at which fancy-dress should not be optional but compulsory. Membership went up by leaps and bounds. The Klan had an object: its ritual was symbolical of something. But to a rite-starved multitude, significance is apparently superfluous. The popularity of community singing has shown that the rite, as such, is what the public wants. So long as it is impressive and arouses an emotion, the rite is good in itself. It does not much matter what it signifies. The ceremony of community singing lacks all philosophical significance, it has no connection with any system of ideas. It is simply itself and nothing more. The traditional rituals of religion and daily life have largely vanished out of the world. But their disappearance has caused regret. Whenever people have a chance they try to satisfy their hunger for ceremonial, even though the rite with which they appease it be entirely meaningless.

## The Artistic Substitute

Art occupies a position of great importance in the modern world. By this I do not mean to imply that modern art is better than the art of other generations. It is obviously not.

The quantity, not the quality, of modern art is important. More people take a conscious interest in art as art. And more devote themselves to its practice than at any other period. Our age, though it has produced few masterpieces, is a thoroughly aesthetic age. This increase in the numbers of the practitioners and dilettanti in all the arts is not unconnected with the decrease in the numbers of religious believers. To minds whose religious needs have been denied their normal fulfilment, art brings a certain spiritual satisfaction. In its lowest forms art is like that emotionally charged ritual for ritual's sake so popular, as we have seen, at the present time. In its higher and more significant forms it is philosophy as well as ritual.

The arts, including music and certain important kinds of literature, have been, at most periods, the handmaids of religion. Their principal function was to provide religion with the visible or audible symbols which create in the mind of the beholder those feelings which for him personally are the god. Divorced from religion, the arts are now independently cultivated for their own sake. That aesthetic beauty which was once devoted to the service of God has now set up as a god on its own. The cultivation of art for its own sake has become a substitute for religion. That it is an extremely inadequate substitute must be apparent to any one who has observed the habits of those who lead the pure, aesthetic life. Where beauty is worshipped for beauty's sake as a goddess, independent of and superior to morality and philosophy, the most horrible putrefaction is apt to set in. The lives of the aesthetes are the far from edifying commentary on the religion of beauty.

## THE RELIGION OF SEX

Other instances might be given of activities which were once part of religion being isolated and endowed with the significance rightly belonging to the whole. Substitutes for religion which were originally no more than a part of the genuine article are peculiarly unsatisfactory and lead their devotees into impossible situations. A good example of such a partial substitute is the puritanical religion of sexual taboos. Asceticism, as we have seen, is a feature common to most religions, and one which in Christianity has been particularly marked. But it has never been the whole of any religion. Among contemporary 'smut-hounds' (to borrow one of Mr. Mencken's expressive coinages one finds people for whom the cult of sexual purity is in itself a complete substitute for religion. The Christian ascetic restrained all his appetites, greed and covetousness as well as lasciviousness, and he restrained them because he believed that by doing so he was pleasing his God. The modern purity-leaguer has no qualms about money-grubbing and gormandizing: his sole preoccupation is sexual licence, particularly in other people. He is often a free-thinker, so that his campaigns against indecency propitiate no God, but are conducted because they are good in themselves. But are they? '*Apud gentiles*,' says St. Thomas, '*fornicatio simplex non reputabatur illicita propter corruptionem naturalis rationis: Judaei, autem ex lege divina instructi, eam illicitam reputabant.*' It is only on this one point that the free-thinking smuthound accepts divine law. In all other matters he trusts to the corruption of his natural reason. He should be more logical and consistent.

It is a remarkable fact that, while one may say, to all intents and purposes, whatever one likes about religion and politics, while one may publicly preach atheism and communism, one may not make public mention, except in a scientific work, of the most rudimentary physiological facts. In most modern countries the only state-supported orthodoxy is a sexual orthodoxy. There is a powerful religion, or rather pseudo-religion, of sexual purity. It cannot, it is true, boast of many sincerely ardent devotees. But most of the few who genuinely believe in it are fanatics. Defined in psychological terms, a fanatic is a man who consciously overcompensates a secret doubt. The fanatics of puritanism are generally found to be overcompensating a secret prurience. Their influence in the modern world is great out of all proportion to their numbers; for few people dare, by opposing them, to run the risk of being called immoral, corrupters of youth, dissolvers of the family, and all the rest (the truly virtuous have an inexhaustible armoury of abuse on which to draw). If the smuthounds had a genuine religion to satisfy them, they would probably be less of a nuisance than they are at present. Ages of faith, if one may judge from medieval literature, were not ages of puritanism.

## BUSINESS

The modern apostles of commerce are trying to persuade people to accept business as a substitute for religion. Money-making, they assert, is a spiritual act; efficiency and common honesty are a service to humanity. Business in general is the supreme God, and the individual Firm is the subsidiary deity to whom devotions are directly paid. For the ambitious, the boomingly prosperous, and those too much involved in strenuous living to be able to do any strenuous thinking, the worship of business may perhaps supply the lack of genuine religion. But its inadequacy is profound and radical. It offers no coherent explanation of any universe outside of that whose centre is the stock exchange; in times of trouble it cannot console; it compensates no miseries; its ideals are too quickly realizable—they open the door to cynicism and indifference. Its virtues are so easily practised that literally any human being who believes in the religion of Business can imagine himself a truly good man. Hence the appalling self-satisfaction and conscious pharisaism so characteristic of the devotees of business. It is a justificatory religion for the rich and those who would become rich. And even with them it works only when times are good and they are without personal unhappiness. At the first note of a tragedy it loses all its efficacy; the briefest slump is sufficient to make it evaporate. The preachers of this commercial substitute for religion are numerous, noisy, and pretentious. But they can never, in the nature of things, be more than momentarily and superficially successful. Men require a more substantial spiritual nourishment than these are able to provide.

## CRANKS

Some human beings are so constituted that almost any idea can take on the qualities of a religious dogma. A condition of absolute belief is reached; the object of belief is itself endowed with absoluteness and so becomes divine; to act on the belief, to serve its deified object, to propagate the truth and combat false doctrine become religious duties. We are all familiar with cranks and the riders of hobbies. Their eccentricities, their absurd and barbarous one-sidedness, are due to the fact that they treat as though it were a religion an idea which has nothing in common with a religious dogma except its quality (for them) of absoluteness. The process by which an idea takes on this religious quality of absoluteness is not the same in all cases. In some cases the absoluteness of a belief is proportionate to the length of time it has been believed. Beliefs received in extreme youth tend to become an integral part of the mind. To deny a very familiar belief—one that has become, so to speak, encrusted with personal associations and tangled in the feelings—is in a real sense to deny the man who holds it. But it is not exclusively by the prescriptive right of mere length of tenure that ideas become absolute. The crank may acquire his hobby comparatively late in life. Moreover, it often happens that cranks will ride several hobbies in succession, treating each in turn as an absolute and religious dogma. There is a recognizable crank-mind with a specific tendency to receive beliefs and endow them with qualities of absoluteness. How and why cranks should transform opinions into religions is somewhat obscure. Cranks, if we may believe Jung, are extreme extraverts—people whose whole spiritual tendency is outwards, towards the object. The object on which their attention fixes itself is an already existing idea, which they embrace with a love and a faith so exclusive that they are driven to a conscious denial of everything else, including even their own self. The self, however, is a living organism, and refuses to be denied without a struggle. Conscious devotion to the external idea is balanced by an unconscious development of the self-regarding tendencies (for the mind, like the body, preserves its equilibrium only because its parts live in a perpetual state of 'hostile symbiosis'). The crank begins to sacrifice himself to his idea for personal motives. The outlawed elements of the personality have revenged themselves upon the idea; but in revenging themselves they have caused the idea to be more tenaciously and violently, because more egotistically, held than ever. If someone doubts the truth of the idea it is a personal insult. A conversion to the idea is a personal triumph. At a later stage the unconscious may carry its counter-attack even further; the crank begins to develop a secret doubt of his absolute. The doubt is consciously overcompensated, and the belief becomes fanatical. Whatever the scientific value of this account of crank mentality, the fact remains that, by whatever process, cranks do transmute opinions into absolute dogmas, which are for them substitutes for religion. I have known men whose religion was homoeopathy, others whose whole life was constellated round the faith that is anti-vivisection. The inadequacy of such ideas as surrogates of the comprehensive dogmas of religion is manifest. The crank lives narrowly and in a real sense insanely.

### Superstitions

If our original assumption is true and human nature has in fact remained fundamentally changeless throughout the historical period, then we should expect to find the contemporary world as full of superstitions as the world of the past. For superstitious beliefs and practices are the expressions of certain states of mind, and if the states of mind exist, so ought the practices and beliefs. Our age has a habit of calling itself enlightened. On what grounds it is difficult to understand, unless it regards as a progress towards enlightenment the fact that its fetishistic and magical superstitions are no longer co-ordinated with a religion, but have, so to speak, broken loose and exist in a state of independence. The Church exploited these habits of superstition and made them serve its own higher ends. Recognizing the fact that many men and women have a tendency to attribute vitality and power to inanimate objects, it supplied their needs, but with inanimate objects of a certain kind—relics, images, and the like—which served to remind the fetish-worshipper of a doctrine more intelligent and far-reaching than his own. The days of Catholic superstition are passed, and we now worship, under the name of mascots, lucky pigs, billikens, swastikas, and the like, a whole pantheon of fetishes which stand for nothing beyond themselves. No one is likely to forget how seriously these fetishes were taken during the War, what powers were then attributed to them, what genuine distress and terror were occasioned by their loss. Now that the danger is over the worship is not so ardent. But that it still persists any one may discover who will but take the trouble to use his eyes and ears. Of spiritualism, fortune-telling, and the practice of magic I shall say nothing. They have always existed and they still exist, unchanged except for the fact that there is no established religion in relation to which these practices are bad or good. The belief in evil spirits, though still common, is probably less widespread than it was, but the human tendency to hypostasize its sense of values is still as strong as ever. Evil spirits being out of fashion, it must therefore find expression in other beliefs. With many people, especially women, bacilli have taken the place of spirits. Microbes for them are the personification of evil. They live in terror of germs and practise elaborate antiseptic rites in order to counteract their influence. There are mothers who find it necessary to sterilize the handkerchiefs that come back from the laundry; who, when their children scratch their finger on a bramble, interrupt their walk and hurry home in search of iodine; who boil and distil the native virtue out of every particle of food or drink. I have known one who would not allow her child to relieve nature anywhere but in the open fields; artificial retiring places were for her infested with the evil spirits called microbes. One is reminded irresistibly of the ritual washings and fumigations, the incessant preoccupation with unclean foods, unlucky days, and inauspicious places, so common among all the primitive peoples. The forms change, but the substance remains.

## PRIEST SURROGATES

The double functions of the priest, who is simultaneously 'overseer of vague things' and doctor of souls, have been distributed in the modern priestless world, and are exercised not by one class of men but by several. In his capacity as administrator of sacraments and interpreter of the surrounding mystery the priest is now represented, inadequately enough, by the artist. The extraordinary and quite disproportionate importance attributed by the contemporary world to artists as such, regardless of their merit, is due to the fact that the artist is the evoker of those emotional states which are the god. True, the god he evokes is often a god of the poorest quality. Consider, for example, the deity implicit in the best-selling novel or the popular ballad. Still, for those who are so constituted that they can like that sort of god, that is the sort of god they will like. There is a hierarchy both among gods and men. Those whose place in the human hierarchy is low worship gods whose place in the divine hierarchy corresponds with their own. The artist-priests who evoke low gods for low worshippers are themselves low. Still, whatever the quality of the god evoked, the artist's act is always sacramental. He does genuinely produce a god of some sort. Hence his importance in the modern world. His name is written large over the pages of *Who's Who*; hostesses ask him out to dinner; gossip writers report his doings in the Press; unknown correspondents write to him about their souls, and ask him for copies of his photograph; young ladies are disposed in advance to fall in love with him. For the artist who enjoys this sort of celebrity the modern world must be a real paradise.

The priest is a confessor as well as an interpreter of mysteries.

The artist can make shift to perform his sacramental functions, but he lacks the kind of training and knowledge that fits a man to be a director of conscience. It is to the lawyer and the doctor that the priest has bequeathed this part of his duties. The doctor, and especially the nerve specialist, occupies an extraordinary position in our world. His prestige was always high, even during those periods when the maladies of the spirit were regarded as being beyond his jurisdiction. Now that the exorcist is extinct and the confessor a rarity, now that psychotherapy professes itself a science and a regular art, the doctor's prestige has been doubled. His position in the modern world is almost that of the medicine man among the primitives.

With the decline of priestly power the importance of the lawyer has also increased. The family solicitor takes vicarious responsibility for the acts of his clients. He is the recipient of their most intimate secrets; he gives them not merely legal but even moral advice. Priests may disappear; but the number of people who do not like to answer for their own actions, who shrink from making decisions and desire to be led, does not decrease. The director of conscience came into existence in response to a genuine human need. Between them, doctor and lawyer supply his vacant place.

*From* PROPER STUDIES

# FASHIONS IN LOVE

Human nature does not change, or, at any rate, history is too short for any changes to be perceptible. The earliest known specimens of art and literature are still comprehensible. The fact that we can understand them all and can recognize in some of them an unsurpassed artistic excellence is proof enough that not only men's feelings and instincts, but also their intellectual and imaginative powers, were in the remotest times precisely what they are now. In the fine arts it is only the convention, the form, the incidentals that change: the fundamentals of passion, of intellect and imagination remain unaltered.

It is the same with the arts of life as with the fine arts. Conventions and traditions, prejudices and ideals and religious beliefs, moral systems and codes of good manners, varying according to the geographical and historical circumstances, mould into different forms the unchanging material of human instinct, passion, and desire. It is a stiff, intractable material—Egyptian granite, rather than Hindu bronze. The artists who carved the colossal statues of Rameses II may have wished to represent the Pharaoh standing on one leg and waving two or three pairs of arms over his head, as the Indians still represent the dancing Krishna. But with the best will in the world they could not have imposed such a form upon the granite. Similarly, those artists in social life whom we call statesmen, moralists, founders of religions, have often wished to mould human nature into forms of superhuman elegance; but the material has proved too stubborn for them, and they have had to be content with only a relatively small alteration in the form which their predecessors had given it. At any given historical moment human behaviour is a compromise (enforced from without by law and custom, from within by belief in religious or philosophical myths) between the raw instinct on the one hand and the unattainable ideal on the other—a compromise, in our sculptural metaphor, between the unshaped block of stone and the many-armed dancing Krishna.

Like all the other great human activities, love is the product of unchanging passions, instincts, and desires (unchanging, that is to say, in the mass of humanity; for, of course, they vary greatly in quantity and quality from individual to individual), and of laws and conventions, beliefs, and ideals, which the circumstances of time and place, or the arbitrary fiats of great personalities, have imposed on a more or less willing society. The history of love, if it were ever written (and doubtless some learned German, unread, alas, by me, *has* written it, and in several volumes), would be like the current histories of art—a record of succeeding 'styles' and 'schools,' of 'influences,' 'revolutions,' 'technical discoveries.' Love's psychological and physiological material remains the same; but every epoch treats it in a different manner, just as every epoch cuts its unvarying cloth and silk and linen into garments of the most diverse fashion. By way of illustration, I may mention that vogue of homosexuality which seems, from all accounts, to have been universal in the Hellenic world. Plutarch attributes the inception of this mode to the custom (novel in the fifth century, according to Thucydides) of exercising naked in the palestra.[1] But whatever may have been its origin, there can be no doubt that this particular fashion in love spread widely among people who were not in the least congenitally disposed to homosexuality. Convention and public opinion moulded the material of love into forms which a later age has chosen to call 'unnatural.' A recrudescence of this amorous mode was very noticeable in Europe during the years immediately following the War. Among the determining causes of this recrudescence a future Plutarch will undoubtedly number the writings of Proust and André Gide.

The present fashions in love are not so definite and universal as those in clothes. It is as though our age were dubiously hesitating between crinolines and hobble skirts, trunk hose and Oxford trousers. Two distinct and hostile conceptions of love coexist in the minds of men and women, two sets of ideals, of conventions, of public opinions, struggle for the right to mould the psychological and physiological material of love. One is the conception evolved by the nineteenth century out of the ideals of Christianity on the one hand and romanticism on the other. The other is that still rather inchoate and negative conception which contemporary youth is in process of forming out of the materials provided by modern psychology. The public opinion, the conventions, ideals, and prejudices which gave active force to the first convention and enabled it, to some extent at least, to modify the actual practice of love, had already lost much of their strength when they were rudely shattered, at any rate in the minds of the young, by the shock of the War. As usually happens, practice preceded theory, and the new conception of love was called in to justify existing post-War manners. Having gained a footing, the new conception is now a cause of new behaviour among the youngest adolescent generation, instead of being, as it was for the generation of the War, an explanation of war-time behaviour made after the fact.

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[1] Plutarch, who wrote some five hundred years after the event, is by no means an unquestionable authority. The habit of which he and Thucydides speak may have facilitated the spread of the homosexual fashion. But that the fashion existed before the fifth century is made sufficiently clear by Homer, not to mention Sappho. Like many modern oriental peoples, the ancient Greeks were evidently, in Sir Richard Burton's expressive phrase, 'omnifutuent.'

Let us try to analyse these two coexisting and conflicting conceptions of love. The older conception was, as I have said, the product of Christianity and romanticism—a curious mixture of contradictions, of the ascetic dread of passion and the romantic worship of passion. Its ideal was a strict monogamy, such as St. Paul grudgingly conceded to amorous humanity, sanctified and made eternal by one of those terrific exclusive passions which are the favourite theme of poetry and drama. It is an ideal which finds its most characteristic expression in the poetry of that infinitely respectable rebel, that profoundly anglican worshipper of passion, Robert Browning. It was Rousseau who first started the cult of passion for passion's sake. Before his time the great passions, such as that of Paris for Helen, of Dido for Aeneas, of Paolo and Francesca for one another, had been regarded rather as disastrous maladies than as enviable states of soul. Rousseau, followed by all the romantic poets of France and England, transformed the grand passion from what it had been in the Middle Ages—a demoniac possession—into a divine ecstasy, and promoted it from the rank of a disease to that of the only true and natural form of love. The nineteenth-century conception of love was thus doubly mystical, with the mysticism of Christian asceticism and sacramentalism, and with the romantic mysticism of Nature. It claimed an absolute rightness on the grounds of its divinity and of its naturalness.

Now, if there is one thing that the study of history and psychology makes abundantly clear, it is that there are no such things as either 'divine' or 'natural' forms of love. Innumerable gods have sanctioned and forbidden innumerable kinds of sexual behaviour, and innumerable philosophers and poets have advocated the return to the most diverse kinds of 'nature.' Every form of amorous behaviour, from chastity and monogamy to promiscuity and the most fantastic 'perversions,' is found both among animals and men. In any given human society, at any given moment, love, as we have seen, is the result of the interaction of the unchanging instinctive and physiological material of sex with the local conventions of morality and religion, the local laws, prejudices, and ideals. The degree of permanence of these conventions, religious myths, and ideals is proportional to their social utility in the given circumstances of time and place.

The new twentieth-century conception of love is realistic. It recognizes the diversity of love, not merely in the social mass from age to age, but from individual to contemporary individual, according to the dosage of the different instincts with which each is born, and the upbringing he has received. The new generation knows that there is no such thing as Love with a large L, and that what the Christian romantics of the last century regarded as the uniquely natural form of love is, in fact, only one of the indefinite number of possible amorous fashions, produced by specific circumstances at that particular time. Psycho-analysis has taught it that all the forms of sexual behaviour previously regarded as wicked, perverse, unnatural, are statistically normal (and normality is solely a question of statistics), and that what is commonly called amorous normality is far from being a spontaneous, instinctive form of behaviour, but must be acquired by a process of education. Having contracted the habit of talking freely and more or less scientifically about sexual matters, the young no longer regard love with that feeling of rather guilty excitement and thrilling shame which was for an earlier generation the normal reaction to the subject. Moreover, the practice of birth-control has robbed amorous indulgence of most of the sinfulness traditionally supposed to be inherent in it by robbing it of its socially disastrous effects. The tree shall be known by its fruits: where there are no fruits, there is obviously no tree. Love has ceased to be the rather fearful, mysterious thing it was, and become a perfectly normal, almost commonplace, activity—an activity, for many young people, especially in America, of the same nature as dancing or tennis, a sport, a recreation, a pastime. For those who hold this conception of love, liberty and toleration are prime necessities. A strenuous offensive against the old taboos and repressions is everywhere in progress.

Such, then, are the two conceptions of love which oppose one another to-day. Which is the better? Without presuming to pass judgment, I will content myself with pointing out the defects of each. The older conception was bad, in so far as it inflicted unnecessary and undeserved sufferings on the many human beings whose congenital and acquired modes of love-making did not conform to the fashionable Christian-romantic pattern which was regarded as being uniquely entitled to call itself Love. The new conception is bad, it seems to me, in so far as it takes love too easily and lightly. On love regarded as an amusement the last word is surely this of Robert Burns:

I waive the quantum of the sin,
  The hazard of concealing;
But oh! it hardens all within
  And petrifies the feeling.

Nothing is more dreadful than a cold, unimpassioned indulgence. And love infallibly becomes cold and unimpassioned when it is too lightly made. It is not good, as Pascal remarked, to have too much liberty. Love is the product of two opposed forces—of an instinctive impulsion and a social resistance acting on the individual by means of ethical imperatives justified by philosophical or religious myths. When, with the destruction of the myths, resistance is removed, the impulse wastes itself on emptiness; and love which is only the product of conflicting forces, is not born. The twentieth century is reproducing in a new form the error of the early nineteenth-century romantics. Following Rousseau, the romantics imagined that exclusive passion was the 'natural' mode of love, just as virtue and reasonableness were the 'natural' forms of men's social behaviour. Get rid of priest and kings, and men will be for ever good and happy; poor Shelley's faith in this palpable nonsense remained unshaken to the end. He believed also in the complementary paralogism that you had only to get rid of social restraints and erroneous mythology to make the Grand Passion universally chronic. Like the Mussets and Sands, he failed to see that the Grand Passion was produced by the restraints that opposed themselves to the sexual impulse, just as the deep lake is produced by the dam that bars the passage of the stream, and the flight of the aeroplane by the air which resists the impulsion given to it by the motor. There would be no air-resistance in a vacuum; but precisely for that reason the machine would not leave the ground, or even move at all. Where there are no psychological or external restraints, the Grand Passion does not come into existence and must be artificially cultivated, as George Sands and Musset cultivated it—with what painful and grotesque results the episode of Venice made only too ludicrously manifest.

'J'aime et je veux pâlir; j'aime et je veux souffrir,' says Musset, with his usual hysterically masochistic emphasis. Our young contemporaries do not wish to suffer or grow pale; on the contrary, they have a most determined desire to grow pink and enjoy themselves. But too much enjoyment 'blunts the fine point of seldom pleasure.' Unrestrained indulgence kills not merely passion, but, in the end, even amusement. Too much liberty is as life-destroying as too much restraint. The present fashion in love-making is likely to be short, because love that is psychologically too easy is not interesting. Such, at any rate, was evidently the opinion of the French, who, bored by the sexual licence produced by the Napoleonic upheavals, reverted (so far, at any rate, as the upper and middle classes were concerned) to an almost anglican strictness under Louis-Philippe. We may anticipate an analogous reaction in the not distant future. What new or what revived mythology will serve to create those internal restraints without which sexual impulse cannot be transformed into love? Christian morality and ascetic ideals will doubtless continue to play their part, but there will no less certainly be other moralities and ideals. For example, Mr. D. H. Lawrence's new mythology of nature (new in its expression, but reassuringly old in substance) is a doctrine that seems to me fruitful in possibilities. The 'natural love' which he sets up as a norm is a passion less self-conscious and high-falutin, less obviously and precariously artificial, than that 'natural love' of the romantics, in which Platonic and Christian notions were essential ingredients. The restraints which Mr. Lawrence would impose on sexual impulse, so as to transform it into love, are not the restraints of religious spirituality. They are restraints of a more fundamental, less artificial, nature—emotional, not intellectual. The impulse is to be restrained from promiscuous manifestations because, if it were not, promiscuity would 'harden all within and petrify the feeling.' The restraint is of the same personal nature as the impulse. The conflict is between a part of the personality and the personality as an organized whole. It does not pretend, as the romantic and Christian conflict pretends, to be a battle between a diabolical Lower Self and certain transcendental Absolutes, of which the only thing that philosophy can tell us is that they are absolutely unknowable, and therefore, for our purposes, non-existent. It only claims to be, what in fact it is, a psychological conflict taking place in the more or less known and finite world of human interests. This doctrine has several great advantages over previous systems of inward restraint. It does not postulate the existence of any transcendental, non-human entity. This is a merit which will be increasingly appreciated as the significance of Kant's and Nietzsche's destructive criticism is more widely realized. People will cease to be interested in unknowable absolutes; but they will never lose interest in their own personalities. True, that 'personality as a whole,' in whose interests the sexual impulse is to be restrained and turned into love, is, strictly speaking, a mythological figure. Consisting, as we do, of a vast colony of souls—souls of individual cells, of organs, of groups of organs, hunger-souls, sex-souls, power-souls, herd-souls, of whose multifarious activities our consciousness (the Soul with a large S) is only very imperfectly and indirectly aware—we are not in a position to know the real nature of our personality as a whole. The only thing we can do is to hazard a hypothesis, to create a mythological figure, call it Human Personality, and hope that circumstances will not, by destroying us, prove our imaginative guesswork too hopelessly wrong. But myth for myth, Human Personality is preferable to God. We do at least know something of Human Personality, whereas of God we know nothing and, knowing nothing, are at liberty to invent as freely as we like. If men had always tried to deal with the problem of love in terms of known human rather than of grotesquely imagined divine interests, there would have been less 'making of eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake,' less persecution of 'sinners,' less burning and imprisoning of the heretics of 'unnatural' love, less Grundyism, less Comstockery, and, at the same time, less dirty Don-Juanism, less of that curiously malignant and vengeful love-making so characteristic of the debauchee under a Christian dispensation. Reacting against the absurdities of the old mythology, the young have run into absurdities no less inordinate at the other end of the scale. A sordid and ignoble realism offers no resistance to the sexual impulse, which now spends itself purposelessly, without producing love, or even, in the long run, amusement, without enhancing vitality or quickening and deepening the rhythms of living. Only a new mythology of nature, such as, in modern times, Blake, Robert Burns, and Lawrence have defined it, an untranscendental and (relatively speaking) realistic mythology of Energy, Life, and

Human Personality, will provide, it seems to me, the inward resistances necessary to turn sexual impulse into love, and provide them in a form which the critical intelligence of post-Nietzschean youth can respect. By means of such a conception a new fashion in love may be created, a mode more beautiful and convenient, more healthful and elegant, than any seen among men since the days of remote and pagan antiquity.

*From* DO WHAT YOU WILL

INASMUCH as he pursues an absolute, the absolute of evil, 'Le débauché est un grand philosophe.' (The *mot* is attributed to the moderately eminent French metaphysician, Jules Lachelier.) The debauchee is a great philosopher. As it stands, the assertion is a little too sweeping; it needs qualification. No doubt the debauchee *was* a great philosopher, once. But ever since the day of Hume he has ceased to be a great philosopher and become a rather silly one. For though it may be sublime to pursue the demonstrably unattainable, it is also ridiculous. A man may spend a laborious and ascetic lifetime writing books on the selenography of the back-side of the moon; we may admire his single-mindedness (if single-mindedness happens to be a quality that strikes us as being admirable), but we must also laugh at his folly. To pursue the absolute is as demonstrably a waste of time as to speculate on the topography of the invisible portions of the moon. Inasmuch as he attempts to rationalize an absolute wickedness, the debauchee may be something of a heroic figure. But he is also something of a figure of fun. And as a philosopher he is, in spite of Professor Lachelier, silly.

Even the sublimest of the satanists are a little ridiculous. For they are mad, all mad; and, however tragical and appalling their insanity may be, madmen are always ridiculous. Ridiculous in their enormous unawareness, in their blindness, in the fixity of their moods, their iron consistency, their unvarying reactions to all that appeals to their mania. Ridiculous, in a word, because they are inhuman. And similarly, even the sublimest satanists (and with them, of course, their looking-glass counterparts, the sublimest saints) are ridiculous as well as grand, because they share with the madman (and deliberately share) his partial blindness, his stiffness, his strained and focused and unwavering fixity of monomaniacal purpose. his inhumanity.

The contrary and at the same time the complement of inhuman rigidity and consistency is a certain inhuman liberty. Concentrated on his one idea, the madman is out of contact with everything else. He loses all touch with reality, and so is free from those limitations which the necessity of making vital adjustments to the outside world imposes on the sane. In spite of their rigid consistency of thought and action, or rather because of it, the saint and the satanist are free, like the madman, to disregard everything but their fixed idea. Often this idea is of a kind which prevents them from having anything like the normal physical relationship with their fellows and with the world at large. When this happens, their inhuman liberty is complete, manifest in all its ghastly grotesqueness. What happens when the intellect and imagination are allowed to break away completely from the wholesome control of the body and the instincts is illustrated with incomparable power by Dostoevsky. Take, for example, *The Possessed.* In the whole of that extraordinary and horrible novel (and the same is true of all Dostoevsky's books) there is not one single character who has a decent physical relationship with any one or any thing whatsoever. Dostoevsky's people do not even eat normally, much less make love, or work, or enjoy nature. That would be much too easy and obvious for such parvenus of intelligence and consciousness as the Russians. Commonplace love, mere creative labour, vulgar enjoyment of real sensuous beauty—these are activities neither 'spiritual' nor 'sinful' enough for newly-conscious Christians, and altogether too 'irrational' to satisfy ex-moujiks suddenly enriched with all the gradually accumulated cultural wealth of Europe. Dostoevsky's characters are typical Russian parvenus to consciousness. Unrestrained by the body, their intellect and imagination have become at once licentious and monomaniacal. And when at last they feel impelled to put their wild, unrestrained imaginings into practice—for it is impossible to go on staring at one's own navel without in the long run becoming a trifle bored—what happens? They go and commit suicide, or murder, or rape, according to the turn their monomanias happen to have taken. How tragic it all is! But also how stupid and grotesque! If Stavrogin could have gone to bed with women he liked, instead of sleeping, on satanically ascetic principles, with women he detested; if Kirillov had had a wife and a job of decent work; if Pyotr Stepanovitch had ever looked with pleasure at a landscape or played with a kitten—none of these tragedies, these fundamentally ludicrous and idiotic tragedies, would have taken place. The horrors that darken *The Possessed* and the other novels of Dostoevsky are tragedies of mental licentiousness. All Dostoevsky's characters (and Dostoevsky himself, one suspects, was rather like them) have licentious minds, utterly unrestrained by their bodies.

They are all emotional onanists, wildly indulging themselves in the void of imagination. Occasionally they grow tired of their masturbations and try to make contact with the world. But they have lost all sense of reality, all knowledge of human values. All their attempts to realize their onanistic dreaming in practice result in catastrophe. It is inevitable. But however agonizing they may be (and Dostoevsky spares us nothing), these tragedies, I repeat, are fundamentally ludicrous and idiotic. They are the absurdly unnecessary tragedies of self-made madmen. We suffer in sympathy, but against our will; afterwards we must laugh. For these tragedies are nothing but stupid farces that have been carried too far.

Robert Burns, after Chaucer the least pretentious and portentous, the most completely and harmoniously human of all English poets, understood this well. His 'Address to the Deil' has for epigraph two tremendous lines from *Paradise Lost*:

O Prince! O Chief of many thronèd pow'rs
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war!

The words go rumbling through the spaces of the Miltonic universe, reverberate in fearful thunder from the roof of hell, in solemn and celestial music from sphere after crystal sphere; but when at last they strike the earth, what very strange and even indecorous echoes are returned!

O Thou! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim and sootie,
  Closed under hatches,
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,
  To scaud poor wretches!

It is the voice of humanity, of sane and humorous and unpretentious humanity, that speaks. Larger than life and half as natural, Milton declaims the potent charms that call up Satan from the abyss; saint and fiend, they stand together, a pair of twins. They are sublime, but for that very reason ridiculous. For the Chief of many thronèd powers is also a comic character, grotesque, like some too villainous villain in an old melodrama —like some too virtuous hero, for that matter.

And the lesser satanists are like their masters. Don Juan, Cain, Heathcliff, Stavrogin—they are all of them figures of fun, in spite of their sublimity, or rather because of it. And the satanists of real life are almost as ridiculous as the satanists of literature. Almost; but not quite, because, unless he is stark, staring mad, the living satanist is never so stiffly consistent, never so utterly free from the normal human restraints, as the satanist in books. It is only when satanists fail to live up to the satanic character that we can take them seriously—for it is then that they begin to be human. When they sublimely succeed, we are compelled to laugh. 'Laughter,' said Baudelaire, 'is satanic.' Some laughter, perhaps. But by no means all. There is a whole gamut of humorous and unferocious laughter that is entirely and characteristically human. And I suspect that it was precisely this human laughter that Baudelaire, the satanist, described as satanic. His values were reversed. The mirth which men like Chaucer or Burns would have found friendly in its quality of humanness, Baudelaire necessarily found hostile and fiendish. For if the devil is man's worst enemy, man is also the devil's. The most powerful solvent of satanic as of any other superhuman pretentions is the good-humoured laughter of human beings. Call the devil Nick or Auld Hornie, and he loses immediately all his impressiveness and half his formidableness. Hence Baudelaire's hatred of laughter; from his satanic point of view it was indeed diabolical. Satan must be dignified at all costs. In his superb and portentous carapace there must be no chink through which the shafts of men's mirth can enter. The laughter-proof armour in which Baudelaire passed his life was a 'sober dandyism' of dress, a frigidly aristocratic manner, a more than English coldness. His clothes, according to Théophile Gautier, had 'un cachet voulu de simplicité anglaise et comme l'intention de se séparer du genre artiste.' 'Contrairement aux mœurs un peu débraillées des artistes, Baudelaire se piquait de garder les plus étroites convenances, et sa politesse était excessive jusqu'à paraître maniérée. Il mesurait ses phrases, n'employait que les termes les plus choisis. . . . La charge, très en honneur à Pimodan, était dédaignée par lui comme artiste et grossière; mais il ne s'interdisait pas le paradoxe et l'outrance. D'un air très simple, très natural et parfaitement détaché . . . il avançait quelque axiome satanique monstrueux. Ses gestes étaient lents, rares et sobres, rapprochés du corps, car il avait en horreur la gesticulation méridionale. Il n'aimait pas non plus la volubilité de parole, et la froideur britannique lui semblait de bon goût. On peut dire de lui que c'était un dandy égaré dans la bohème mais y gardant son rang et ses manières et ce culte de soi-même qui caractérise l'homme imbu des principes de Brummell.' What elaborate precautions against the possible

laughter of humanity! Satan is a gentleman, and only on condition of remaining a gentleman can he be Satan. The moment he loses his Brummellesque dignity and becomes Auld Hornie or Auld Nick, he is just a poor devil, nothing more. If Baudelaire could sometimes have dropped his dandy's correctness, could sometimes have permitted himself to be called Clootie, he would have been certainly a happier and completer man and perhaps a better because a more comprehensive poet.

But he preferred to cling to his satanic dignity; he buckled his laughter-proof armour yet more tightly about him. It was as a kind of Black Prince that he confronted the world—a dark figure, tragical and terrific, but at the same time ludicrous in being too imposing, insufficiently supple.

'Sin,' says St. Paul, 'is not imputed when there is no law. . . . Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound.' Only a believer in absolute goodness can consciously pursue the absolute of evil; you cannot be a Satanist without being at the same time, potentially or actually, a Godist. Baudelaire was a Christian inside out, the photographic image in negative of a Father of the Church. His philosophy was orthodox—nay, more than orthodox, almost jansenistic. His views on original sin (in modern times the touchstone of orthodoxy) were entirely sound. They were much sounder, for example, than those of Jesus. Jesus could say, speaking of little children, that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven'; a sound Augustinian, Baudelaire called them 'des Satans en herbe.' He had the good Christian's contempt for the modern belief in progress. 'La croyance au progrès,' he said, 'est une doctrine de Belges.' And when Baudelaire had said of a thing that it was Belgian he had called it the worst name in his vocabulary.

To this Christian, who accepted the doctrine of the Fall with all its consequences, Humanitarianism was simply criminal nonsense. Man was by nature malignant and stupid. The 'universal silliness of every class, individual, sex, and age' filled him, as it filled Flaubert, with a chronic indignation. Those who, like the painter Wiertz (another Belgian!), believed in 'the immortal principles of '89,' he regarded almost as personal enemies. 'Le Christ des humanitaires,' he writes in his notes on Wiertz. 'Peinture philosophique. Sottises analogues à celles de Victor Hugo à la fin des Contemplations. Abolition de la peine de mort, puissance infinie de l'homme!' For the democrat's ingenuous faith in the power of education to make all men equally intelligent and virtuous he had nothing but contempt. One of his projects was to write an essay on the 'infamie de l'imprimerie, grand obstacle au développement du Beau.' Wholly Christian again was Baudelaire's attitude towards the question of individual responsibility. For the eighteenth-century humanitarians, who started from the axiom that man in a 'state of nature' is virtuous and reasonable, there could not, logically, be such a thing as sin in the Christian, or crime in the legal sense of the word; the individual was not to blame for his bad actions. The entire responsibility rested with the Environment, with Society, with Bad Laws, Priestcraft, Superstition, and so forth. For Baudelaire only the individual counted. Those who do wrong must bear the whole responsibility for their wrongdoing. And what actions, according to Baudelaire, are wrong? The answer is simple: they are the actions which the Church regards as sinful. St. Paul never hated the flesh and all its works more venomously than did Baudelaire; Prudentius never wrote of love with a fiercer vehemence of disgust. For the poet, as for the Christian moralists, the worst, because the most attractive, the commonest, the apparently most harmless sins were those of a sexual nature. Avoid them, then! was the command of the moralists. But Baudelaire was a looking-glass Christian; for him the categorical imperative was just the opposite of this. Indulgence is hateful to God; therefore (such is the logic of the satanists) indulge. 'La volupté unique et suprême de l'amour gît dans la certitude de faire le mal. Et 'homme et la femme savent de naissance que dans le mal se trouve toute volupté.' Baudelaire liked revolution for the same reason as he liked love. 'Moi, quand je consens à être républicain (he did a little desultory shooting from the barricades in 1848), je fais le mal, le sachant. . . . Je dis: Vive la Révolution! comme je dirais: Vive la Destruction! Vive la Mort! Nous avons tous l'esprit républicain dans les veines comme la vérole dans les os. Nous sommes démocratisés et syphilisés!' He hated and despised the revolutionaries who imagined that they were acting for the benefit of the human race. 'Moi, je me fous du genre humain.' 'A taste for vengeance and the natural pleasure of demolition' were what drove *him* to the barricades.

But politics and, in general, 'action' (in the popular sense of the word) were distasteful to him. It was only theoretically that he 'understood a man's deserting one cause for the sake of knowing what it would feel like to serve another.' An invincible dislike of all causes but that of poetry prevented him from attempting the experiment in practice. And in the same way, when he said that 'not only would he be happy to be the victim, but that he would not object to being the executioner—so as to feel the Revolution in both ways,' it was only a matter of words. His own active participation in the Revolution was too brief to permit of his being either victim or executioner.

Much of Baudelaire's satanism even outside the sphere of politics was confined to words. Inevitably: for Baudelaire liked his freedom, and in a well-policed society the satanists who put their principles too freely into practice get thrown into jail. From Baudelaire's conversation you would have imagined that he was a mixture of Gilles de Rais, Heliogabalus, and the Marquis de Sade. At any rate, that was what he wanted you to imagine. But reputations have a strange life of their own, over which their subject has little or no control. Baudelaire would have liked the world to regard him as the incarnation of all the gentlemanly wickednesses. Instead of which—but let me quote his own words: 'Un jour une femme me dit: C'est singulier; vous êtes fort convenable; je croyais que vous étiez toujours ivre et que vous sentiez mauvais.'

To have the reputation of being unpleasantly smelly—could anything have been more humiliating to the man who saw himself as the Chief of many thronèd powers! Those who knew him personally made, of course, no such mistakes. Their friend was no vulgar Bohemian, but a Dandy; if he was wicked, it was in the grand manner, like a gentleman, not an artist. But they also knew that a great deal of his aristocratic satanism was purely platonic and conversational. Baudelaire was a practising satanist only in those circumstances in which active satanism is not interfered with by the police. All satanisms of violence and fraud were thus ruled out. He talked about treacheries and executions, but did not act them. The most interesting of the legally tolerated sins are those of the flesh. Baudelaire was therefore, above all, a satanist of love. But not in the manner of the ferocious Marquis, nor even of Don Juan. He did not victimize his partners; he victimized only himself. His cruelties were directed inwards. Harmlessly, one is tempted to say; the harmless cruelties of an academic satanist. And harmless, in one sense, they were. Baudelaire's path was not strewn with seduced young girls, adulterous wives, and flagellated actresses. Regrettably, perhaps. For this apparently harmless variety of satanism is in certain ways the most harmful of all. The flagellator and the seducer do a certain strictly limited amount of damage among their feminine acquaintances. The self-victimizing satanist is infinitely more destructive. For what are a few virginities and a few square inches of tanned cocotte-skin compared with the entire universe? The entire universe—nothing less. The satanist who is his own victim defaces and defiles for himself the entire universe. And when, like Baudelaire, he happens to be a great poet, he defaces and defiles it for his readers. Your Sades and Juans are never ruinous on this enormous scale. For they enjoy their satanisms—not very whole-heartedly, perhaps, and always crazily; but still enjoy. They go their way carolling with Pippa: 'Nick 's in his Hades, all 's right with the world.' The self-victimizer has no enjoyments to rationalize into a jolly Browningesque philosophy. The world is hateful to him; he himself has made it so.

Baudelaire treated himself with a studied malignancy. He took pains to make the world as thoroughly disgusting for himself as he could. As an example of his satanic technique, let me quote this fragment of autobiography from one of his sonnets:

> Une nuit que j'étais près d'une affreuse juive,
>   Comme au long d'un cadavre un cadavre étendu,
>   Je me pris à songer près de ce corps vendu
> A la triste beauté dont mon désir se prive.

Appalling lines! Reading them, one seems to sink through layer after darkening, thickening layer of slimy horror. A shuddering pity takes hold of one. And then amazement, amazement at the thought that this revolting torture was self-inflicted.

Torture, torture—the word comes back to one hauntingly, again and again, as one reads the *Fleurs du Mal.* Baudelaire himself brooded over the notion. 'Love is like a torture or a surgical operation. This idea can be developed in the bitterest way. Even when the two lovers are very much in love and full of reciprocal desires, one of the two will always be calmer or less possessed than the other. He, or she, is the operator, the executioner; the other is the patient, the victim.' The tortures which Baudelaire inflicted on himself were not mere operations; they were more horrible than that. Between him and the 'frightful Jewesses' there was not even the possibility of reciprocal desire—there was nothing but disgust. His tortures were mostly those of defilement. To be chained to a corpse, to be confined in the midst of rats and excrement—these were the punishments to which he satanically condemned himself. And even his respites from the frightful Jewesses were only milder tortures. That 'sad beauty of whom his desire deprived itself' was a drunken negress, whose vulgarity shocked every fibre of his soul, whose stupidity amazed and appalled him, who drained him of his money and showed her gratitude by cuckolding him whenever she had an opportunity.

Quand elle eut de mes os sucé toute la moelle,
Et que languissamment je me tournai vers elle
Pour lui rendre un baiser d'amour, je ne vis plus
Qu'une outre aux flancs gluants, toute pleine de pus.

In spite of which, or because of which, Baudelaire remained indissolubly attached to his mulatto. After their most serious quarrel he lay in his bed for days, uncontrollably and incessantly weeping. In spite or because of the fact that she represented sex in its lowest form, he loved her.

But frightful Jewesses and hardly less frightful negresses were not the only object of Baudelaire's love. For,

Quand chez les débauchés l'aube blanche et vermeille
  Entre en société de l'Idéal rongeur,
  Par l'opération d'un mystère vengeur
Dans la brute assoupie un ange se réveille.

In other words, that morning-after sentiment, that *omne-animal-triste* feeling which, according to the Ancients, tinges with melancholy the loves of every creature but the mare and the woman, is easily and naturally rationalized in terms of Christian-Platonic idealism. The angel in Baudelaire was never fast asleep. For, as I have already pointed out, a man cannot be a Satanist who is not at the same time a Godist. Above the frightful Jewesses and negresses among whom Baudelaire had condemned himself to pass his life, hovered a white-winged, white-night-gowned ideal of feminine purity. The lineaments of this angelic child of fancy were by the poet occasionally superimposed on those of a real, flesh-and-blood woman, who thereupon ceased to be a woman and became, in the words used by Baudelaire himself when writing to one of his deified lady friends (an artist's model in this case), 'un objet de culte' which it was 'impossible de souiller.' Unhappily the 'impossibility of defilement' was not so absolute as he could have wished. Idealization is a process which takes place only in the idealist's fancy: it has no perceptible effect upon the thing idealized. The 'object of worship' remains incurably what it was—in this case a woman. This regrettable fact was personally rediscovered by Baudelaire in the most ridiculously humiliating circumstances. Mme Sabatier was a merry young widow who gave literary and artistic dinner-parties. The Goncourts call her 'une vivandière de faunes'; and she herself, it would seem, was also a trifle faunesque in her tastes and habits. It was in this unlikely temple of plump luxuriant flesh and more than ordinarily warm blood that Baudelaire chose to lodge his divine ideal. The fauns' barmaid became for him an object of worship. For five years he adored, piously. Then, the publication of the *Fleurs du Mal* and the subsequent lawsuit having made him suddenly famous, Mme Sabatier decided, without solicitation on his part, to yield. Invited to treat his deity as a human, even an all too human being, Baudelaire found himself incapable of rising to the occasion. The lady was offended—justifiably. She reproached him. Baudelaire returned her reproaches. 'Il y a quelques jours,' he wrote, 'tu étais une divinité, ce qui est si commode, ce qui est si beau, ce qui est si inviolable. Te voilà femme maintenant.' It was unforgivable. 'J'ai horreur de la passion,' he went on to explain, 'parce que je la connais avec toutes ses ignominies.' As a matter of fact, Baudelaire knew very little about passion. He knew the defiling torture of submitting to the embraces of frightful Jewesses; and, in the arms of his negress, he knew the madness, the fixed incurable monomania, of exclusive sensuality. At the other end of the scale he knew the worship of inviolable divinities—a worship, of which one of the conditions was precisely the joyless or frantic debauchery among the Jewesses and negresses. For 'la femme dont on ne jouit point est celle qu'on aime. . . . Ce qui rend la maîtresse plus chère, c'est la débauche avec d'autres femmes. Ce qu'elle perd en jouissances sensuelles elle gagne en adoration.' These strange perversities were what Baudelaire called passion. Of the more normal amorous relationships he was wholly ignorant. We may doubt whether he ever embraced a woman he respected, or knew what it was to combine desire with esteem, and tenderness with passion. Indeed, he would have denied the very possibility of such combinations. His theory of love was the theory of those extreme, almost Manichean Christians who condemned indiscriminately every form of physical passion, and regarded even marriage as a sin. Between mind and body, spirit and matter, he had fixed an impassable gulf. Body was wholly bad; therefore, according to the logic of satanism, it had to be indulged as much and above all as sordidly as possible.

Spirit was wholly good; therefore, when 'dans la brute assoupie un ange se réveille,' there must be nothing in the nature of a (by definition) defiling physical contact.

Where love was concerned, Baudelaire, in the phrase of Ivan Karamazov, 'returned God his entrance ticket.' He refused to accept love; he wanted something better. With the result, of course, that he got something much worse and that love refused to accept *him*. The best is ever the enemy of the good, and nowhere more murderously the enemy than where love is concerned. Baudelaire's idea of the best love was a purely mental relationship, a conscious interbecoming of two hitherto separate beings. Ordinary, unideal love was for him an 'épouvantable jeu,' because at least 'one of the players must lose the government of himself.' Moreover, 'dans l'amour, comme dans presque toutes les affaires humaines, l'entente cordiale est le résultat d'un malentendu. Ce malentendu, c'est le plaisir. L'homme crie: O mon ange! La femme roucoule: Maman! Maman! Et ces deux imbéciles sont persuadés qu'ils pensent de concert. Le gouffre infranchissable qui fait l'incommunicabilité reste infranchi.' But, after all, why shouldn't it remain uncrossed? And why shouldn't one sometimes lose the government of oneself? We may think ourselves happy that we do not possess a perfect and uninterrupted awareness of self and of others. How fatiguing existence would be if consciousness and will were never given a holiday, if there were no 'frightful games,' in the course of which one might occasionally lose one's head! How fatiguing! And also how trivial and petty! For, in love at any rate, a man loses his head for the sake of something bigger and more important than his own ego, of something not himself that makes for life. And then the horror of being wholly transparent to somebody else, wholly clear-sighted oneself! Thanks, however, to the body, there can be no complete awareness, because there can be no mingling of substance, no interbecoming. The body guarantees our privacy, that inmost privacy, which we must not attempt to violate under pain of betraying our manhood.

> Aye free, aff han' your story tell,
>   When wi' a bosom cronie;
> But still keep something to yoursel'
>   Ye scarcely tell to onie.

To none, indeed—even in love. The realization of Baudelaire's ideal would be a psychological catastrophe. But being a sound, if satanic, Christian, with a prejudice in favour of mind and spirit, and a contemptuous hatred of the body, Baudelaire could not understand this; on the contrary, he imagined that he was yearning for his own and humanity's highest good. When he saw that there was no prospect of his getting what he yearned for, he renounced love altogether in favour of self-tormenting debauchery on the one hand, and long-range adoration on the other.

With that sovereign good sense which, in spite of the strangenesses and absurdities of their beliefs, generally distinguished the actions of the men of the Middle Ages, the great platonizing poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries harmonized philosophy and the exigencies of daily living, the ideal and the real, in a manner incomparably more satisfactory. Thus, there was a Mrs. Dante as well as a Beatrice, there were no less than four little Dantes; Dante's friend and fellow-poet, Guido Cavalcanti, also had a wife and a family; and though Petrarch never married, two bastard children, borne by the same mother and at an interval of six years, testify to the fact that Laura's inordinately platonic friend was only prevented by the accident of his having taken orders from being as good and faithful a husband as he was, by all accounts, a tenderly solicitous father. Admirably inconsistent, these poets sang the praises of sacred love, while making the very best of the profane variety in the arms of an esteemed and affectionate spouse. Their platonic relationships existed on the margin of marriage or its equivalent, just as, in the larger world, the monasteries existed on the margin of secular life. Monk and platonic mistress testified to the existence of the spiritual ideal; those whose temperament impelled them to take extreme courses were at liberty to devote themselves to the ideal either in the cloister or in the poet's study. Whatever happened, the ideal was not to be allowed to invade the sanctities of normal domestic life. This, as we realize when we read the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Decameron*, remained throughout the Middle Ages most wholesomely pagan, in spite of Christianity. The Reformation upset the medieval balance. Stupidly consistent, the Bible-reading Protestants abolished the monasteries and let loose the idealism, hitherto safely bottled up on the outskirts of normal life, on the devoted heads of ordinary men and women. For the monk was substituted the puritan. It was a change deplorably for the worse. Confined to his private asylum on the margin of society, the monk had been harmless. The puritan was free to range the world, blighting and persecuting as he went, free to make life poisonous, not only for himself, but for all who came near him. The puritan was and is a social danger, a public and private nuisance of the most odious kind. Baudelaire was a puritan inside out. Instead of asceticism and respectability he practised debauchery. The means he used were the opposite of those employed by the puritans; but his motives and theirs, the ends that he and they achieved, were the same. He hated life as much as they did, and was as successful in destroying it.

Incapable of understanding the inconsistencies even of the medieval Christians, Baudelaire was still less capable of understanding the much more radical inconsistencies of the pagan Greeks. For the Greeks, all the gods (or in other words all the aspects of human nature) were equally divine. The art of life consisted, for them, in giving every god his due. These dues were various. Thus, Apollo's due was very different from the debt a man owed to Dionysus. Indeed, one due might be incompatible with another; but every one was owed and, in its proper time and season, must be acknowledged. No god must be cheated and none overpaid. Baudelaire was utterly un-Hellenic. Only once or twice in all his work does he touch a pagan theme, and then it is as a puritanical Jansenist, as an early Father of the Church, that he treats it. Read, for example, the poem called 'Lesbos.' Here are a few characteristic extracts:

> Laisse du vieux Platon se froncer l'œil austère;
> Tu tires ton pardon de l'excès des baisers . . .
>
> Tu tires ton pardon de l'éternel martyre
> Infligé sans relâche aux cœurs ambitieux . . .
>
> Qui des Dieux osera, Lesbos, être ton juge,
>   Et condamner ton front pâli dans les travaux,
> Si ses balances d'or n'ont pesé le déluge,
>   Des larmes qu'à la mer ont versé tes ruisseaux?
> Qui des Dieux osera, Lesbos, être ton juge?

To the contemporaries and the successors of Sappho these lines would have been absolutely incomprehensible. All this talk about pardon and martyrdom, judgment and tears—the Greeks would have shaken their heads over it in utter bewilderment. For them, love-making was not something that required pardoning or judging. And what did it matter, after all, if 'les Phyrnés l'une l'autre s'attirent'? To the Greeks it was a matter of almost perfect indifference whether one made love with somebody of one's own or somebody of the other sex. There is little in Plato's writing and still less in the reputation he enjoyed among his fellow-Greeks to make us suppose that he frowned very austerely on homosexual embraces. The gods, if one can credit their official biographers, were as little likely to pass judgment on Lesbos as Plato. And if one of them had taken it into his head to do so, is it likely that he would have found many tears in the Lesbian streams? None certainly of remorse or conscious guilt. The only tears which Hellenic lovers ever seem to have dropped were those, in youth, of unsatisfied desire and those, when age had made them feeble and ugly, of regret for pleasures irrevocably past. Occasionally, too, they may have wept the *lacrimae rerum.* For, like all realists, the Greeks were, at bottom, profoundly pessimistic. In spite of its beauty, its inexhaustible strangeness and rich diversity, the world, they perceived, is finally deplorable. Fate has no pity; old age and death lie in wait at the end of every vista. It is therefore our duty to make the best of the world and its loveliness while we can—at any rate during the years of youth and strength. Hedonism is the natural companion of pessimism. Where there is laughter, there also you may expect to find the 'tears of things.' But as for tears of repentance and remorse—who but a fool would want to make the world more deplorable than it already is? Who but a life-hating criminal would want to increase the sum of misery at the expense of man's small portion of precarious joy?

The earth is rich in silicon; but our bodies contain hardly a trace of it. It is poor in phosphorus; yet in phosphorus we are rich. Sea water contains little lime and almost infinitely little copper; nevertheless, there is copper in the blood of certain crustaceans and in the shell of every mollusc abundance of lime. It is much the same in the psychological as in the physical world. We live in a spiritual environment in which, at any given moment, certain ideas and sentiments abound, certain others are rare. But in any individual mind the proportions may be reversed. For the environment does not flow into us mechanically; the living mind takes up from it only what suits it, or what it is capable of taking. What suits the majority of minds (which are but weak, under-organized beings) is of course the environment. But strong, original minds may and often do dislike their surroundings. What suits them may exist in only the smallest quantities in the spiritual medium they inhabit. But like the copper-blooded crustaceans, like the lime-shelled molluscs, they have a wonderful art to find and take up what they need. Baudelaire exemplifies this type. In the age of Buckle and Podsnap, of optimism and respectability, he was the most savage and gloomy of Augustinian Christians, the most conscientious of debauchees. Why? His private history provides the explanation. The key facts are these: he had a childish passion for his mother, and his mother, while he was still a boy, married a second husband. This marriage was a shock from which he never recovered. Whole tracts of his consciousness were suddenly ravaged by it. He had adored and idealized—the more extravagantly for the fact that his adoration and idealization had been mingled with a precocious and slightly perverse sensuality. The divinity was suddenly thrown down and violated. He hated the violator and everything that could remind him of the act of violation; he adored the memory of the yet inviolate divinity. The cynicism and perversity of adolescence got mixed in his hatred and made him take an agonizing and degrading pleasure in rehearsing in thought and, later, in act the scenes of violation. In the intervals, when he was exhausted, he worshipped a disembodied goddess. And this was what he went on doing all his life. Needing, like all men, a philosophical explanation for his actions, he found it in the semi-Manichean Christianity of the early monks and the Jansenists. A very slight twist was enough to turn the creed and ethics of Pascal into a self-torturing, world-destroying satanism. On the other face of the satanic medal were those tendencies towards 'spiritual' love, so grotesquely exemplified in the case of Mme Sabatier.

Baudelaire was not merely a satanist; he was a bored satanist. He was the poet of ennui, of that appalling boredom which can assume 'les proportions de l'immortalité.' The personal causes of this boredom are easily traceable. From quite early youth Baudelaire never enjoyed good health. Syphilis was in his blood: he drank too much; he took, in one form or another, large quantities of opium; he was an experimenter with haschisch; he was chronically exhausted by a joyless and at last utterly pleasureless debauchery. In the physical circumstances it was difficult for a man to feel very gay and buoyant. His purse was as sick as his body. He was never out of debt; his creditors unceasingly harassed him; he lived in a perpetual state of anxiety. A neurosis of which one of the symptoms was a terrible depression was the result. This depression, he records, became almost unbearable during the autumn months—those terrible, dreary months—

Quand le ciel bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle
 Sur l'esprit gémissant en proie aux longs ennuis,
Et que de l'horizon embrassant tout le cercle
 Il nous verse un jour noir plus triste que les nuits.

These are, I know, but summary and superficial generalizations; and though it would be easy, with the aid of the biographical documents which the labours of the Crépets, father and son, have placed at our disposal, to explain, in detail and plausibly enough, all the characteristic features of Baudelaire's poetry in terms of his personal history, I shall not attempt the task. For what above all interests me here is not Baudelaire as a man, but Baudelaire as an influence, a persisting force. For a force he is.

'Avec Baudelaire,' writes M. Paul Valéry, 'la poésie française sort enfin des frontières de la nation. Elle se fait lire dans le monde; elle s'impose comme la poésie même de la modernité; elle engendre l'imitation, elle féconde de nombreux esprits. . . . Je puis donc dire que, s'il est parmi nos poètes, des poètes plus grands et plus puissamment doués que Baudelaire, il n'en est de plus *important*.' Baudelaire is now the most important of French, and indeed of European, poets. His poetry, which is the poetry of self-stultifying, world-destroying satanism and unutterable ennui, has come to be regarded 'comme la poésie même de la modernité.' The fact is, surely, odd. Let us try to understand its significance.

The most important of modern poets was a satanist. Does this mean that his contemporary admirers are, like him, despairing absolute-hunters with a

goût de l'infini
Qui partout dans le mal lui-même se proclame?

No. For to be a Satanist, as I have said before, one must also be a Godist; and the present age is singularly Godless. Debauchery was a tragical affair in Baudelaire's day; it is now a merely medical one. We feel scientifically about our sins, not satanically. Why, then, do we admire this topsy-turvy Jansenist, for whom the only pleasure in love was the consciousness of doing wrong? We ought to despise him for being so hopelessly old-fashioned. And hopelessly old-fashioned we do find him; but only in the Christian and tragical interpretation of his actions. The actions themselves are perfectly up-to-date. 'Tes débauches sans soif et tes amours sans âme' are indistinguishable from the extreme forms of the modern 'Good Time.' The joylessness of modern pleasures and modern love (which are, of course, the image of the 'modern' pleasures and loves of imperial Rome as it approached its catastrophe) is even completer than the joylessness of Baudelaire's debauchery. For Baudelaire, the Christian satanist, had at least the stimulating consciousness that, in malignantly ruining the universe for himself, he was doing evil. The moderns fail to get even this 'kick' out of their self- and world-destroying entertainments. They perversely do what they don't want to do, what fails to amuse them, and do not even have the pleasure of imagining that they are thereby committing a sin.

The flesh is diabolic, the spirit divine. Therefore, commands the satanist, indulge the flesh to satiety and beyond. The modernist philosophy and the modernist ethic are different. Neither the spirit nor the flesh, nor for that matter anything at all, is divine. The only important thing is that a man should be socially efficient. Passion is the enemy of efficiency. So don't let your instincts run away with you; on the other hand, don't repress them too much. Repression interferes with efficiency. Efficiency demands that you should neither give yourself completely away nor keep yourself completely back. Those who live by this godless philosophy and obey these purely medical commandments soon reduce their own lives and, consequently, the entire universe to a grey nothingness. In order not to be too unbearably conscious of this fact they surround themselves with an ever-increasing number of substitutes for genuine feeling. To create in themselves the illusion of being alive, they make a noise, they rush about, they hasten from distraction to distraction. Much to the profit of the shareholders in the great amusement industries. In a word, they have a Good Time.

Now, the better the time (in the modern sense of the term), the greater the boredom. Rivers found that the unhappy Melanesians literally and physically died of ennui when they were brought too suddenly in contact with modern amusements. We have grown gradually accustomed to the disease, and we therefore find it less lethal than do the South Sea islanders. We do not die outright of it; it is only gradually that we approach the fatal conclusion of the malady. It will come, that fatal conclusion, when men have entirely lost the art of amusing themselves; they will then simply perish of ennui. Modern creation-saving machinery has already begun to deprive them of this art. The progress of invention may confidently be expected to quicken the process. A few more triumphs in the style of the radio and the talkies, and the boredom which is now a mere discomfort will become an intolerable agony.

We turn to poetry for the perfect expression of our own feelings. In the *Fleurs du Mal* the modern finds all his own sufferings described—with what incomparable energy, in forms how memorably beautiful!

> Je suis comme le roi d'un pays pluvieux,
> Riche mais impuissant, jeune et pourtant très vieux!

It is 'la poésie même de la modernité.'

*From* DO WHAT YOU WILL

# SQUEAK AND GIBBER

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

Poetically, of course, they could have done nothing else but squeak and gibber. They could never, for example, have cried and muttered, nor wailed and whispered, still less have indulged in hauntings and direct voice manifestations. The mysterious laws of poetry demanded that they should squeak and gibber and do nothing but squeak and gibber. Squeaking and gibbering are, in the circumstances, artistically inevitable; they are also, as it happens, historically correct. For the Roman dead, at any rate in the earlier, higher, and palmier phases of Roman history, *did* squeak and gibber. They squeaked as feebly and they gibbered as ineffectively as those poor anaemic ghosts for whom Odysseus prepared, on the border of Hades, that tonic meal of blood. During the millennium which immediately preceded the Christian era, and in the lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, ghosts were thin, shadowy, hardly personal beings. The dead survived, but wretchedly faintly, as mere shadows. 'There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest.' The words are from Ecclesiastes; but they might have been spoken almost anywhere in the Mediterranean world at almost any time between the Trojan war and the murder of Julius Caesar.

The squeak-and-gibber period of immortality came to an end, roughly speaking, at the beginning of the Christian era. Cicero and Virgil were still believers in the Homeric doctrines; they looked forward to a posthumous existence not more, but much less glorious than life on earth. 'Rather would I live on the ground as a hireling of another, with a landless man who had no great livelihood, than bear sway among the dead.' Their views were fundamentally the same as Homer's.

In this, they were not, for their age, very modern. For Plato and the mystagogues had already, long before, begun looking forward to a posthumous future very different from that which awaited the Homeric and Old Testament heroes. In Cicero's time, the squeak-and-gibber hypothesis was fast becoming antiquated. The rise of Christianity rendered it heretical as well as old-fashioned. The Christian dead were not allowed to squeak and gibber; they had either to sing and play the harp, or else to scream in never-ending agony. And they have continued to make music or scream until very recent times. In the course of the last century, however, very considerable changes have taken place. The fully Christian, fully personal, fully moral dead, with their music and their beatific vision, their deprivation of God's presence and their tortures, are now, I should guess, in the minority. What of the other departed? Many of them are simply non-existent; for the number of people who either dogmatically don't believe in, or else agnostically or uncaringly simply don't bother about, immortality is now considerable. Some, however, are glorious but impersonal survivors, reabsorbed, pantheistically, into a divine and universal Whole. Others again—the departed ones with whom certain spiritualists establish contacts, live on in an up-to-date version of the Red Indian's Happy Hunting Ground, a superior and slightly less material repetition of the present world complete with whiskies and sodas, cigars, and midget golf-courses. The number of believers in this sort of survival seems to be increasing. Finally there is the scientific Psychical Researcher, whose views on the future life (if we may judge from the pronouncements of such eminent authorities as Professor C. E. Broad and M. René Sudre) seem to be almost indistinguishable from those held by Homer and the author of Ecclesiastes. For all that survives, according to these researches (and the existing evidence, it seems to me, does not justify one in going any further), is what Professor Broad calls a 'psychic factor'—something which, in conjunction with a material brain, creates a personality but which, in isolation, is no more personal than matter. The dead, then, survive, but only fragmentarily, feebly, as mere wisps of floating memories. In a word, the squeak-and-gibber theory of survival is that which, according to some of the most competent scientific observers, best fits the available facts. Western thought has come back, where the question of immortality is concerned, to the point from which it started. And this is not surprising; for as Professor Leuba pointed out years ago in his excellent book, *The Belief in God and Immortality*, the Homeric conception of survival, the squeak-and-gibber theory as I have called it, is fundamentally scientific—a theory made to fit observable facts. Some of these facts, as we now see, were irrelevant to the question of survival. Others, however, were relevant.

The living sometimes have dreams or waking visions of the dead; sometimes, when they are thinking of the departed they experience the strange and singularly convincing 'sense of presence.' Ingenuous minds interpret such experiences in terms of a theory of survival—a squeak-and-gibber theory; for it is the only one which fits this class of facts, just as it is the only one which fits the facts (if facts they are) of apparitions, hauntings, and the like. The modern psychical researcher bases his squeak-and-gibber theory on this latter class of 'super-normal' facts. The contemporaries of Homer based their similar theory on these same super-normalities (for presumably they manifested themselves then at least as often as they do now); but also on the quite irrelevant normalities of dream, vision, sense of presence, and the like. Old and new, both are scientific theories, that is to say, theories made to fit certain observed facts. The only difference between them is that the Homeric theorists accepted, as relevant, facts which we now see to have been beside the point. It happened, however, that their squeak-and-gibber theory fitted the irrelevant facts as neatly as it fitted and fits the relevant facts. So that their mistake was comparatively unimportant.

The Platonic and Christian theory of immortality—the harp-and-scream, as opposed to the squeak-and-gibber conception of a future life—is in no sense a scientific hypothesis. It was not created to fit observed facts; it was created to satisfy certain desires—some, of the most crassly selfish nature, others, the most loftily idealistic. The existence of these ideals and aspirations and even of these purely selfish longings for a continuance of personal being has been taken by many philosophers as the major premise of an argument, whose conclusion is the proved fact of personal and retributive immortality. But, as Broad has shown, it is hard (though not, in certain cases, impossible) to construct a logical bridge between the world of morality and the world of scientific truth; and anyhow, as a matter of historical fact, such bridges, when constructed, have almost invariably collapsed. Thus, the moral argument in favour of immortality will not bear the weight of scepticism. This logical bridge is a hopelessly ramshackle structure, and can be crossed only by those who wear the wings of faith and therefore have no real need of its support. As for the biological argument—that the existence of an inborn desire must imply the existence of an object of that desire, as hunger implies the existence of food and sexual desire that of a possible mate—this would be cogent only if the desire were universal. But it is not and has never been universal; the desire for survival is therefore not analogous to hunger or sexual appetite. Other philosophers have argued from the desire to the fact of immortality by asserting our incapacity even to conceive the cessation of our consciousness. This inconceivability of our own unconsciousness is a fact of psychology, upon which it is interesting and profitable to meditate. But since there is no difficulty at all in conceiving the cessation of other people's consciousness, I do not see that the argument derived from this fact can ever be wholly convincing. Immortality of the Platonic or Christian kind has been and must presumably remain the object only of hope, of longing, of faith; the survival, if survival it is, which is the object of scientific observation is survival of the Homeric kind—the squeak-and-gibber survival of shadowy and impersonal 'psychic factors.' By trying to interpret the facts of psychical research in terms of a modified Christian hypothesis, the spiritualists have involved themselves in inextricable difficulties. For the facts of psychical research simply do not warrant the adoption of anything remotely resembling a harp-and-scream conception of survival; the only rational interpretation to which they lend themselves is an interpretation in terms of some kind of squeak-and-gibber theory. Which is, admittedly, rather depressing. But then a great many things in this universe are rather depressing. Others, fortunately, are not. What we lose on the swings of pain, pointlessness, and evil, we gain on a variety of aesthetic, sensuous, intellectual, and moral roundabouts. Given a reasonable amount of luck, it is possible to live a not intolerable life. And if, afterwards, we find ourselves condemned to squeak and gibber, why, then, squeak and gibber we must. In the meantime let us make the best of rational speech.

One of the stock arguments in favour of Platonic and Christian immortality is this: if there were no future life, or at any rate no belief in future life, men would be justified in behaving like animals and, being justified, would all incontinently start taking the advice of Horace and the Preacher to do nothing but swill, guzzle, and copulate. Even a man of Dostoevsky's intelligence oracularly affirms that 'all things would be permitted' if there were no such thing as immortality. These moralists seem to forget that there are many human beings who simply don't want to pass their lives eating, drinking, and being merry, or, alternatively, like Russian heroes, raping, murdering, and morally torturing their friends. The deadly tedium of the Horatian and the nauseating unpleasantness of the Dostoevskyan life would be quite enough, survival or no survival, to keep me at any rate (in these matters one can only speak for oneself) unswervingly in the narrow way of domestic duty and intellectual labour. For the narrow way commands an incomparably wider, and, so far as I am concerned, an incomparably fairer prospect than the primrose path; fulfilled, domestic duties are a source of happiness, and intellectual labour is rewarded by the most intense delights. It is not the hope of heaven that prevents me from leading what is technically known as a life of pleasure; it is simply my temperament. I happen to find the life of pleasure boring and painful. And I should still find it boring and painful even it it were irrefragably proved to me that I was destined to be extinguished or, worse, to survive in the form of a squeaking and gibbering shade—as one of the 'weak heads,' in Homer's expressive phrase. *Nekuōn amenēna karēna*—the weak heads of the dead. Those who have attended spiritualistic séances will agree that the description is painfully accurate.

*From* MUSIC AT NIGHT

# BELIEFS AND ACTIONS

To the collectors of human specimens (a class to which I myself belong; for psychological varieties are the only things I have ever thought it worth while to collect) I recommend the two volumes of M. Jean Martet on the late Georges Clémenceau. One may not entirely approve of Clémenceau as a politician: one may even detest some of the principles and the methods of his statecraft. But in spite of this disapproval and hatred it is impossible not to admire the old Tiger, it is impossible to withhold the homage due to a most extraordinary man. For after all there is nothing more admirable than Power—not the organized power of established society, which is generally detestable, but the native power of the individual, the demonic energy of life. With this native inborn power, this living energy, Georges Clémenceau was richly endowed. A great man differs from common men by being, as it were, possessed by more than human spirits. These spirits may be good or evil; it is a matter almost of indifference. The important thing is that they should be more than human. It is the supernaturalness that makes the greatness and that we are forced to admire—even in the cases where the supernaturalness is morally evil and destructive. That Clémenceau was 'possessed' one cannot doubt. His devils may have worked in ways we disapprove of, to achieve ends which are not our ends, but they were genuine supernatural devils and, as such, worthy of all our admiration.

So much by way of somewhat irrelevant introduction to my theme. For my theme is not Georges Clémenceau. It is a theme of general psychological and historical interest which the ghost of Clémenceau happened to suggest to me and of which the Tiger's career is a good illustration. For, reading M. Martet's book the other day I came upon the words recorded by him in the course of a conversation with the old statesman about the revolutionary socialists. 'These people,' said Clémenceau, 'do a lot of squealing so long as you allow them to squeal. But when you say "Shut up!" they shut up. . . . They are mostly half-wits, and, what 's more, they 're hardly more courageous than the bourgeois—which is saying a good deal, my word! The thing that gives people courage is ideas. But these revolutionaries of yours have about as many ideas as my boots. Envy and resentment—that 's all they 've got. That sort of thing doesn't take you very far. I saw them during the War; I talked with them, I tried to find something in them; it 's pitiable. I never had the smallest difficulty with these creatures.'

'The thing that gives people courage is ideas.' The phrase might be expanded. For it is not only courage that comes from ideas; it is determination; it is the power to act, the power to go on acting coherently. For though it is true that most ideas are the rationalizations of feelings, that does not mean that feelings are more important in the world of action than ideas. Feeling provides the original supply of energy, but this supply of energy soon fails if the feelings are not rationalized. For the rationalization justifies the feelings and serves at the same time both as a substitute for feelings and as a stimulant for them when they are dormant. You cannot go on feeling violently all the time—the human organism does not allow of it. But an idea persists; once you have persuaded yourself of its truth, an idea justifies the continuance in cold blood of actions which emotion could only have dictated in the heat of the moment. Indeed it does more than justify actions and feelings; it imposes them. If you accept an idea as true, then it becomes your duty to act on it even in cold blood as a matter not of momentary feeling, but of enduring principle. It is even your duty to revive the emotion which was originally at the root of the idea—or rather the new and nobler emotion which, thanks to the idea, has taken the place of the root feeling from which the idea started. Thus, to take an obvious example, envy—whether of the lucky in money or of the lucky in love—is constantly being rationalized in terms of political, economic, and ethical theory. For all those who cannot compete with him the successful amorist is a monster of immorality. The envied rich man is either wicked personally or vicariously wicked as the representative of an evil system. And having persuaded themselves of the iniquity of those they envy, the environs are not only justified in their now laudable hostility to the envied; they are also no longer envious. The idea has transformed their odious little personal feeling into a righteous indignation, a nobly disinterested love of virtue and abhorrence of wickedness. '*Ce qui donne du courage, ce sont les idées.*'

A question inevitably arises. What are the principal courage-giving, emotion-transforming, and action-inspiring ideas of the present epoch? They are certainly not the same as they were. Many of the great ideas which our ancestors accepted with little or no question are now only lukewarmly believed in or even rejected outright. Thus, the Christian, the specifically Catholic and Protestant ideas, once of such enormous significance and the source of so much creative and destructive action, have now lost a great deal of their potency. There are comparatively few men and women in the contemporary West who unquestionably rationalize their feelings in terms of the Christian philosophy and the Christian ethic, few who find in the old Christian ideas a source of courage and determination, a motive for prolonged and effective action. These religious ideas are not the only ones to have lost their force. There has been a decline in the effectiveness of certain political ideas, once immensely important. All the once inspiring ideas of nineteenth-century Liberalism are now without much power to move. It is only among the politically naïve and inexperienced populations of the East that we find them exerting anything like their ancient influence. The most powerful political idea at the present time is the idea of nationalism. It is the justifier and transformer of a whole host of emotions, the persisting motive of important individual and collective actions. Nationalism was the idea that gave old Clémenceau his ruthless and indomitable energy. '*Ce qui donne du courage, ce sont les idées.*' He knew it by personal experience.

The idea of progress is another of the great contemporary ideas. A vast amount of personal ambition, of rapacity, of lust for power is sanctified and at the same time made actively effective by this idea. It is in the idea of progress, coupled very often with the humanitarian idea of universal welfare and social service, that the modern business man finds excuses for his activities. Why does he work so hard? Why does he fight so ruthlessly against his rivals? To obtain power and make himself rich, the cynical realist would answer. Not at all, the business man indignantly replies, I am working and fighting for progress, for prosperity, for society.

There are signs, I believe, that this belief in progress and the ideas of humanitarianism is on the wane. The youngest generation seems to be less anxious than was its predecessor to justify its money-making and power-seeking in terms of these ideas. It affirms quite frankly that it works in order that it may be able to amuse itself in the intervals of leisure. The result of this rejection (it is still, of course, only a very partial rejection) of the inspiring ideas of an earlier generation is that the enthusiasm for work has perceptibly declined and that the amount of energy put into the money-making and power-seeking activities is less than it was. For it may be laid down as a general rule that any decline in the intensity of belief leads to a decline in effective activity.

And here we find ourselves confronted with two more questions. Is scepticism on the increase? and if so, what sort of new inspiring and justificatory ideas are men likely to accept in lieu of the old ideas in which they no longer believe? My impression is that we must answer yes to the first question. There is, I believe, a general increase in scepticism with regard to most of the hitherto accepted ideas, particularly in the sphere of ethics. There is a growing tendency to rely on momentary emotions as guides to conduct rather than on the fixed ideas in terms of which these emotions have hitherto been rationalized. The result is a general decline in the quality and quantity of activity among the sceptical.

In its extreme forms, however, scepticism is, for most human beings, intolerable. They must believe in something; they must have some sort of justificatory ideas. The contemporary circumstances (under which heading we must include recent political events, recent scientific discoveries, recent philosophical speculation) have forced on us a more or less complete scepticism with regard to most of the religious, ethical, and political ideas in terms of which our fathers could rationalize their feelings. For most of these ideas postulated the existence of certain transcendental entities. But it is precisely about these transcendental entities that modern circumstances compel us to feel sceptical. We find it difficult at the moment to believe in anything but untranscendental realities. (It is quite likely, of course, that this difficulty is only temporary and that a change of circumstances may reimpose belief in transcendental ideas. For the moment, however, we are sceptical about everything except the immediate.) In our daily lives the most important immediate realities are changing desires, emotions, moods. Some people accept these as they come and live from hand to mouth. But the 'realism' they profess is not only slightly sordid and ignoble; it is also sterile. It leaves them without courage, as Clémenceau would say, without the motive and the power to pursue a course of effective action. Many therefore seek for new justifying 'ideas' as a support and framework for their lives. These ideas, as we have seen, must not be in any way transcendental. The characteristically modern rationalization of feelings, desires, and moods is a rationalization in terms of the untranscendental—in terms, that is to say, of known psychology, not of postulated Gods, Virtues, Justices, and the like. The modern emphasis is on personality. We justify our feelings and moods by an appeal to the 'right to happiness,' the 'right to self-expression.' (This famous 'right to self-expression,' unthinkable in days when men firmly believed that they had duties to God, has done enormous mischief in the sphere of education.) In other words, we claim to do what we like, not because doing what we like is in harmony with some supposed absolute good, but because it is good in itself. A poor justification and one which is hardly sufficient to make men courageous and active. And yet modern circumstances are such that it is only in terms of this sort of 'idea' that we can hope successfully to rationalize our emotional and impulsive behaviour. My own feeling is that these untranscendental rationalizations can be improved. It is possible, as Blake said, to see infinity in a grain of sand and eternity in a flower. Only in terms of such an idea, it seems to me, can the modern man satisfactorily 'rationalize' (though the idea is mystically irrational) his feelings and impulses. Whether such rationalizations are as good, pragmatically speaking, as the old rationalizations in terms of transcendental entities, I do not know. On the whole, I rather doubt it. But they are the best, it seems to me, that the modern circumstances will allow us to make.

*From* MUSIC AT NIGHT

# SELECTED SNOBBERIES

All men are snobs about something. One is almost tempted to add: There is nothing about which men cannot feel snobbish. But this would doubtless be an exaggeration. There are certain disfiguring and mortal diseases about which there has probably never been any snobbery. I cannot imagine, for example, that there are any leprosy-snobs. More picturesque diseases, even when they are dangerous, and less dangerous diseases, particularly when they are the diseases of the rich, can be and very frequently are a source of snobbish self-importance. I have met several adolescent consumption-snobs, who thought that it would be romantic to fade away in the flower of youth, like Keats or Marie Bashkirtseff. Alas, the final stages of the consumptive fading are generally a good deal less romantic than these ingenuous young tubercle-snobs seem to imagine. To any one who has actually witnessed these final stages, the complacent poeticizings of these adolescents must seem as exasperating as they are profoundly pathetic. In the case of those commoner disease-snobs, whose claim to distinction is that they suffer from one of the maladies of the rich, exasperation is not tempered by very much sympathy. People who possess sufficient leisure, sufficient wealth, not to mention sufficient health, to go travelling from spa to spa, from doctor to fashionable doctor, in search of cures from problematical diseases (which, in so far as they exist at all, probably have their source in overeating) cannot expect us to be very lavish in our solicitude and pity.

Disease-snobbery is only one out of a great multitude of snobberies, of which now some, now others, take pride of place in general esteem. For snobberies ebb and flow; their empire rises, declines, and falls in the most approved historical manner. What were good snobberies a hundred years ago are now out of fashion. Thus, the snobbery of family is everywhere on the decline. The snobbery of culture, still strong, has now to wrestle with an organized and active low-browism, with a snobbery of ignorance and stupidity unique, so far as I know, in the whole of history. Hardly less characteristic of our age is that repulsive booze-snobbery, born of American Prohibition. The malefic influences of this snobbery are rapidly spreading all over the world. Even in France, where the existence of so many varieties of delicious wine has hitherto imposed a judicious connoisseurship and has led to the branding of mere drinking as a brutish solecism, even in France the American booze-snobbery, with its odious accompaniments—a taste for hard drinks in general and for cocktails in particular—is making headway among the rich. Booze-snobbery has now made it socially permissible, and in some circles even rather creditable, for well-brought-up men and (this is the novelty) well-brought-up women of all ages, from fifteen to seventy, to be seen drunk, if not in public, at least in the very much tempered privacy of a party.

Modernity-snobbery, though not exclusive to our age, has come to assume an unprecedented importance. The reasons for this are simple and of a strictly economic character. Thanks to modern machinery, production is outrunning consumption. Organized waste among consumers is the first condition of our industrial prosperity. The sooner a consumer throws away the object he has bought and buys another, the better for the producer. At the same time, of course, the producer must do his bit by producing nothing but the most perishable articles. 'The man who builds a skyscraper to last for more than forty years is a traitor to the building trade.' The words are those of a great American contractor. Substitute motor car, boot, suit of clothes, etc., for skyscraper, and one year, three months, six months, and so on for forty years, and you have the gospel of any leader of any modern industry. The modernity-snob, it is obvious, is this industrialist's best friend. For modernity-snobs naturally tend to throw away their old possessions and buy new ones at a greater rate than those who are not modernity-snobs. Therefore it is in the producer's interest to encourage modernity-snobbery. Which in fact he does do—on an enormous scale and to the tune of millions and millions a year—by means of advertising. The newspapers do their best to help those who help them; and to the flood of advertisement is added a flood of less directly paid-for propaganda in favour of modernity-snobbery. The public is taught that up-to-dateness is one of the first duties of man. Docile, it accepts the reiterated suggestion. We are all modernity-snobs now.

Most of us are also art-snobs. There are two varieties of art-snobbery—the platonic and the unplatonic. Platonic art-snobs merely 'take an interest' in art. Unplatonic art-snobs go further and actually buy art. Platonic art-snobbery is a branch of culture-snobbery. Unplatonic art-snobbery is a hybrid or mule; for it is simultaneously a sub-species of culture-snobbery and of possession-snobbery. A collection of works of art is a collection of culture-symbols, and culture-symbols still carry social prestige. It is also a collection of wealth-symbols. For an art collection can represent money more effectively than a whole fleet of motor cars.

The value of art-snobbery to living artists is considerable. True, most art-snobs collect only the works of the dead; for an Old Master is both a safer investment and a holier culture-symbol than a living master. But some art-snobs are also modernity-snobs. There are enough of them, with the few eccentrics who like works of art for their own sake, to provide living artists with the means of subsistence.

The value of snobbery in general, its humanistic 'point,' consists in its power to stimulate activity. A society with plenty of snobberies is like a dog with plenty of fleas: it is not likely to become comatose. Every snobbery demands of its devotees unceasing efforts, a succession of sacrifices. The society-snob must be perpetually lion-hunting; the modernity-snob can never rest from trying to be up to date. Swiss doctors and the Best that has been thought or said must be the daily and nightly preoccupation of all the snobs respectively of disease and culture.

If we regard activity as being in itself a good, then we must count all snobberies as good; for all provoke activity. If, with the Buddhists, we regard all activity in this world of illusion as bad, then we shall condemn all snobberies out of hand. Most of us, I suppose, take up our position somewhere between the two extremes. We regard some activities as good, others as indifferent or downright bad. Our approval will be given only to such snobberies as excite what we regard as the better activities; the others we shall either tolerate or detest. For example, most professional intellectuals will approve of culture-snobbery (even while intensely disliking most individual culture-snobs), because it compels the Philistines to pay at least some slight tribute to the things of the mind and so helps to make the world less dangerously unsafe for ideas than it otherwise might have been. A manufacturer of motor cars, on the other hand, will rank the snobbery of possessions above culture-snobbery; he will do his best to persuade people that those who have fewer possessions, particularly possessions on four wheels, are inferior to those who have more possessions. And so on. Each hierarchy culminates in its own particular Pope.

*From* MUSIC AT NIGHT

# D. H. LAWRENCE

'I ALWAYS say, my motto is "Art for my sake."' The words are from a letter written by Lawrence before the War. 'If I *want* to write, I write—and if I don't want to, I won't. The difficulty is to find exactly the form one's passion—work is produced by passion with me, like kisses—is it with you?—wants to take.'

'Art for my sake.' But even though for my sake, still art. Lawrence was always and unescapably an artist. Yes, unescapably is the word; for there were moments when he wanted to escape from his destiny. 'I wish from the bottom of my heart that the fates had not stigmatized me "writer." It is a sickening business.' But against the decree of fate there is no appeal. Nor was it by any means all the time that Lawrence wanted to appeal. His complaints were only occasional, and he was provoked to make them, not by any hatred of art as such, but by hatred of the pains and humiliations incidental to practising as an artist. Writing to Edward Garnett, 'Why, why,' he asks, 'should we be plagued with literature and suchlike tomfoolery? Why can't we live decent, honourable lives, without the critics in the Little Theatre fretting us?' The publication of a work of art is always the exposure of a nakedness, the throwing of something delicate and sensitive to the 'asses, apes, and dogs.' Mostly, however, Lawrence loved his destiny, loved the art of which he was a master—as who, that is a master, can fail to do? Besides, art, as he practised it, and as, at the bottom, every artist, even the most pharisaically 'pure' practises it, was 'art for my sake.' It was useful to him, pragmatically helpful. 'One sheds one's sicknesses in books—repeats and presents again one's emotions to be master of them.' And, anyhow, liking or disliking were finally irrelevant in the face of the fact that Lawrence was in a real sense possessed by his creative genius. He could not help himself. 'I am doing a novel,' he writes in an early letter, 'a novel which I have never grasped. Damn its eyes, there I am at page 145 and I 've no notion what it 's about. I hate it. F. says it is good. But it 's like a novel in a foreign language I don't know very well—I can only just make out what it 's about.' To this strange force within him, to this power that created his works of art, there was nothing to do but submit. Lawrence submitted, completely and with reverence. 'I often think one ought to be able to pray before one works—and then leave it to the Lord. Isn't it hard work to come to real grips with one's imagination—throw everything overboard. I always feel as though I stood naked for the fire of Almighty God to go through me—and it 's rather an awful feeling. One has to be so terribly religious to be an artist.' Conversely, he might have added, one has to be terribly an artist, terribly conscious of 'inspiration' and the compelling force of genius, to be religious as Lawrence was religious.

It is impossible to write about Lawrence except as an artist. He was an artist first of all, and the fact of his being an artist explains a life which seems, if you forget it, inexplicably strange. In *Son of Woman*, Mr. Middleton Murry has written at great length about Lawrence—but about a Lawrence whom you would never suspect, from reading that curious essay in destructive hagiography, of being an artist. For Mr. Murry almost completely ignores the fact that his subject—his victim, I had almost said—was one whom 'the fates had stigmatized "writer."' His book is *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark—for all its metaphysical subtleties and its Freudian ingenuities, very largely irrelevant. The absurdity of his critical method becomes the more manifest when we reflect that nobody would ever have heard of a Lawrence who was not an artist.

An artist is the sort of artist he is, because he happens to possess certain gifts. And he leads the sort of life he does in fact lead, because he is an artist, and an artist with a particular kind of mental endowment. Now there are general abilities and there are special talents. A man who is born with a great share of some special talent is probably less deeply affected by nurture than one whose ability is generalized. His gift is his fate, and he follows a predestined course, from which no ordinary power can deflect him. In spite of Helvétius and Dr. Watson, it seems pretty obvious that no amount of education—including under that term everything from the Oedipus complex to the English Public School system—could have prevented Mozart from being a musician, or musicianship from being the central fact in Mozart's life. And how would a different education have modified the expression of, say, Blake's gift? It is, of course, impossible to answer. One can only express the unverifiable conviction that an art so profoundly individual and original, so manifestly 'inspired,' would have remained fundamentally the same whatever (within reasonable limits) had been the circumstances of Blake's upbringing. Lawrence, as Mr. F. R. Leavis insists, has many affinities with Blake. 'He had the same gift of knowing what he was interested in, the same power of distinguishing his own feelings and emotions from conventional sentiment, the same "terrifying honesty."' Like Blake, like any man possessed of great special talents, he was predestined by his gifts. Explanations of him in terms of a Freudian hypothesis of nurture may be interesting, but they do not explain. That Lawrence was profoundly affected by his love for his mother and by her excessive love for him, is obvious to any one who has read *Sons and Lovers*. None the less it is, to me at any rate, almost equally obvious that even if his mother had died when he was a child, Lawrence would still have been, essentially and fundamentally, Lawrence. Lawrence's biography does not account for Lawrence's achievement. On the contrary, his achievement, or rather the gift that made the achievement possible, accounts for a great deal of his biography. He lived as he lived, because he was, intrinsically and from birth, what he was. If we would write intelligibly of Lawrence, we must answer, with all their implications, two questions: first, what sort of gifts did he have? and secondly, how did the possession of these gifts affect the way he responded to experience?

Lawrence's special and characteristic gift was an extraordinary sensitiveness to what Wordsworth called 'unknown modes of being.' He was always intensely aware of the mystery of the world, and the mystery was always for him a *numen*, divine. Lawrence could never forget, as most of us almost continuously forget, the dark presence of the otherness that lies beyond the boundaries of man's conscious mind. This special sensibility was accompanied by a prodigious power of rendering the immediately experienced otherness in terms of literary art.

Such was Lawrence's peculiar gift. His possession of it accounts for many things. It accounts, to begin with, for his attitude towards sex. His particular experiences as a son and as a lover may have intensified his preoccupation with the subject; but they certainly did not make it. Whatever his experiences, Lawrence *must* have been preoccupied with sex; his gift made it inevitable. For Lawrence, the significance of the sexual experience was this: that, in it, the immediate, nonmental knowledge of divine otherness is brought, so to speak, to a focus—a focus of darkness. Parodying Matthew Arnold's famous formula, we may say that sex is something not ourselves that makes for—not righteousness, for the essence of religion is not righteousness; there is a spiritual world, as Kierkegaard insists, beyond the ethical—rather, that makes for life, for divineness, for union with the mystery. Paradoxically, this something not ourselves is yet a something lodged within us; this quintessence of otherness is yet the quintessence of our proper being. 'And God the Father, the Inscrutable, the Unknowable, we know in the flesh, in Woman. She is the door for our in-going and our out-coming. In her we go back to the Father; but like the witnesses of the transfiguration, blind and unconscious.' Yes, blind and unconscious; otherwise it is a revelation, not of divine otherness, but of very human evil. 'The embrace of love, which should bring darkness and oblivion, would with these lovers (the hero and heroine of one of Poe's tales) be a daytime thing, bringing more heightened consciousness, visions, spectrum-visions, prismatic. The evil thing that daytime love-making is, and all sex-palaver!' How Lawrence hated Eleonora and Ligeia and Roderick Usher and all such soulful Mrs. Shandies, male as well as female! What a horror, too, he had of all Don Juans, all knowing sensualists and conscious libertines! (About the time he was writing *Lady Chatterley's Lover* he read the memoirs of Casanova, and was profoundly shocked.) And how bitterly he loathed the Wilhelm-Meisterish view of love as an education, as means to culture, a Sandow-exerciser for the soul! To *use* love in this way, consciously and deliberately, seemed to Lawrence wrong, almost a blasphemy. 'It seems to me queer,' he says to a fellow writer, 'that you prefer to present men chiefly—as if you cared for women not so much for what they were in themselves as for what the men saw in them. So that after all in your work women seem not to have an existence, save they are the projections of the men . . . It 's the *positivity* of women you seem to deny—make them sort of instrumental.' The instrumentality of Wilhelm Meister's women shocked Lawrence profoundly.

(Here, in a parenthesis, let me remark on the fact that Lawrence's doctrine is constantly invoked by people, of whom Lawrence himself would passionately have disapproved, in defence of a behaviour, which he would have found deplorable or even revolting. That this should have happened is by no means, of course, a condemnation of the doctrine. The same philosophy of life may be good or bad according as the person who accepts it and lives by it is intrinsically fine or base Tartufe's doctrine was the same, after all, as Pascal's. There have been refined fetish-worshippers, and unspeakably swinish Christians. To the preacher of a new way of life the most depressing thing that can happen is, surely, success. For success permits him to see how those he has converted distort and debase and make ignoble parodies of his teaching. If Francis of Assisi had lived to be a hundred, what bitterness he would have tasted! Happily for the saint, he died at forty-five, still relatively undisillusioned, because still on the threshold of the great success of his order. Writers influence their readers, preachers their auditors—but always, at bottom, to be more themselves. If the reader's self happens to be intrinsically similar to the writer's, then the influence is what the writer would wish it to be. If he is intrinsically unlike the writer, then he will probably twist the writer's doctrine into a rationalization of beliefs, an excuse for behaviour, wholly alien to the beliefs and behaviour approved by the writer. Lawrence has suffered the fate of every man whose works have exercised an influence upon his fellows. It was inevitable and in the nature of things.)

For someone with a gift for sensing the mystery of otherness, true love must necessarily be, in Lawrence's vocabulary, *nocturnal*. So must true knowledge. Nocturnal and tactual—a touching in the night. Man inhabits, for his own convenience, a home-made universe within the greater alien world of external matter and his own irrationality. Out of the illimitable blackness of that world the light of his customary thinking scoops, as it were, a little illuminated cave—a tunnel of brightness, in which, from the birth of consciousness to its death, he lives, moves, and has his being. For most of us this bright tunnel is the whole world. We ignore the outer darkness; or if we cannot ignore it, if it presses too insistently upon us, we disapprove, being afraid. Not so Lawrence. He had eyes that could see, beyond the walls of light, far into the darkness, sensitive fingers that kept him continually aware of the environing mystery. He could not be content with the home-made, human tunnel, could not conceive that any one else should be content with it. Moreover—and in this he was unlike those others, to whom the world's mystery is continuously present, the great philosophers and men of science—he did not want to increase the illuminated area; he approved of the outer darkness, he felt at home in it. Most men live in a little puddle of light thrown by the gig-lamps of habit and their immediate interest; but there is also the pure and powerful illumination of the disinterested scientific intellect. To Lawrence, both lights were suspect, both seemed to falsify what was, for him, the immediately apprehended reality—the darkness of mystery. 'My great religion,' he was already saying in 1912, 'is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what the blood feels, and believes, and says, is always true,' Like Blake, who had prayed to be delivered from 'single vision and Newton's sleep': like Keats, who had drunk destruction to Newton for having explained the rainbow, Lawrence disapproved of too much knowledge, on the score that it diminished men's sense of wonder and blunted their sensitiveness to the great mystery. His dislike of science was passionate and expressed itself in the most fantastically unreasonable terms. 'All scientists are liars,' he would say, when I brought up some experimentally established fact, which he happened to dislike. 'Liars, liars!' It was a most convenient theory. I remember in particular one long and violent argument on evolution, in the reality of which Lawrence always passionately disbelieved. 'But look at the evidence, Lawrence,' I insisted, 'look at all the evidence.' His answer was characteristic. 'But I don't care about evidence. Evidence doesn't mean anything to me. I don't feel it *here.*' And he pressed his two hands on his solar plexus. I abandoned the argument and thereafter never, if I could avoid it, mentioned the hated name of science in his presence. Lawrence could give so much, and what he gave was so valuable, that it was absurd and profitless to spend one's time with him disputing about a matter in which he absolutely refused to take a rational interest. Whatever the intellectual consequences, he remained through thick and thin unshakably loyal to his own genius. The *daimon* which possessed him was, he felt, a divine thing, which he would never deny or explain away, never even ask to accept a compromise. This loyalty to his own self, or rather to his gift, to the strange and powerful *numen* which, he felt, used him as its tabernacle, is fundamental in Lawrence and accounts, as nothing else can do, for all that the world found strange in his beliefs and his behaviour. It was not an incapacity to understand that made him reject those generalizations and abstractions by means of which the philosophers and the men of science try to open a path for the human spirit through the chaos of phenomena. Not incapacity, I repeat; for Lawrence had, over and above his peculiar gift, an extremely acute intelligence. He was a clever man as well as a man of genius. (In his boyhood and adolescence he had been a great passer of examinations.) He could have understood the aim and methods of science perfectly well if he had wanted to. Indeed, he did understand them perfectly well; and it was for that very reason that he rejected them. For the methods of science and critical philosophy were incompatible with the exercise of his gift—the immediate perception and artistic rendering of divine otherness. And their aim, which is, to push back the frontier of the unknown, was not to be reconciled with his aim, which was to remain as intimately as possible in contact with the surrounding darkness. And so, in spite of their enormous prestige, he rejected science and critical philosophy; he remained loyal to his gift. Exclusively loyal. He would not attempt to qualify or explain his immediate knowledge of the mystery, would not even attempt to supplement it by other, abstract knowledge. 'These terrible, conscious birds, like Poe and his Ligeia, deny the very life that is in them; they want to turn it all into talk, into *knowing*. And so life, which will not be known, leaves them.' Lawrence refused to *know* abstractly. He preferred to live; and he wanted other people to live.

No man is by nature complete and universal; he cannot have first-hand knowledge of every kind of possible human experience. Universality, therefore, can only be achieved by those who mentally simulate living experience—by the knowers, in a word, by people like Goethe (an artist for whom Lawrence always felt the most intense repugnance).

Again, no man is by nature perfect, and none can spontaneously achieve perfection. The greatest gift is a limited gift. Perfection, whether ethical or aesthetic, must be the result of knowing and of the laborious application of knowledge. Formal aesthetics are an affair of rules and the best classical models; formal morality, of the ten commandments and the imitation of Christ.

Lawrence would have nothing to do with proceedings so 'unnatural,' so disloyal to the gift, to the resident or visiting *numen*. Hence his aesthetic principle, that art must be wholly spontaneous, and, like the artist, imperfect, limited, and transient. Hence, too, his ethical principle that a man's first moral duty is not to attempt to live above his human station, or beyond his inherited psychological income.

The great work of art and the monument more perennial than brass are, in their very perfection and everlastingness, inhuman—too much of a good thing. Lawrence did not approve of them. Art, he thought, should flower from an immediate impulse towards self-expression or communication, and should wither with the passing of the impulse. Of all building materials Lawrence liked adobe the best; its extreme plasticity and extreme impermanence endeared it to him. There could be no everlasting pyramids in adobe, no mathematically accurate Parthenons. Nor, thank heaven, in wood. Lawrence loved the Etruscans, among other reasons, because they built wooden temples, which have not survived. Stone oppressed him with its indestructible solidity, its capacity to take and indefinitely keep the hard uncompromising forms of pure geometry. Great buildings made him feel uncomfortable, even when they were beautiful. He felt something of the same discomfort in the presence of any highly finished work of art. In music, for example, he liked the folk-song, because it was a slight thing, born of immediate impulse. The symphony oppressed him; it was too big, too elaborate, too carefully and consciously worked out, too 'would-be'—to use a characteristic Lawrencian expression. He was quite determined that none of his writings should be 'would-be.' He allowed them to flower as they liked from the depths of his being and would never use his conscious intellect to force them into a semblance of more than human perfection, or more than human universality. It was characteristic of him that he hardly ever corrected or patched what he had written. I have often heard him say, indeed, that he was incapable of correcting. If he was dissatisfied with what he had written, he did not, as most authors do, file, clip, insert, transpose; he re-wrote. In other words, he gave the *daimon* another chance to say what it wanted to say. There are, I believe, three complete and totally distinct manuscripts of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Nor was this by any means the only novel that he wrote more than once. He was determined that all he produced should spring direct from the mysterious, irrational source of power within him. The conscious intellect should never be allowed to come and impose, after the event, its abstract pattern of perfection.

It was the same in the sphere of ethics as in that of art. 'They want me to have form: that means, they want me to have *their* pernicious, ossiferous, skin-and-grief form, and I won't.' This was written about his novels; but it is just as applicable to his life. Every man, Lawrence insisted, must be an artist in life, must create his own moral form. The art of living is harder than the art of writing. 'It is a much more delicate thing to make love, and win love, than to declare love.' All the more reason, therefore, for practising this art with the most refined and subtle sensibility; all the more reason for not accepting that 'pernicious skin-and-grief form' of morality, which *they* are always trying to impose on one. It is the business of the sensitive artist in life to accept his own nature as it is, not to try to force it into another shape. He must take the material given him—the weaknesses and irrationalities, as well as the sense and the virtues; the mysterious darkness and otherness no less than the light reason and the conscious ego—must take them all and weave them together into a satisfactory pattern; *his* pattern, not somebody else's pattern. 'Once I said to myself: "How can I blame—why be angry?" . . . Now I say: "When anger comes with bright eyes, he may do his will. In me he will hardly shake off the hand of God. He is one of the archangels, with a fiery sword. God sent him—it is beyond my knowing."' This was written in 1910. Even at the very beginning of his career Lawrence was envisaging man as simply the locus of a polytheism. Given his particular gifts of sensitiveness and of expression it was inevitable. Just as it was inevitable that a man of Blake's peculiar genius should formulate the very similar doctrine of the independence of states of being. All the generally accepted systems of philosophy and of ethics aim at policing man's polytheism in the name of some Jehovah of intellectual and moral consistency. For Lawrence this was an indefensible proceeding. One god had as much right to exist as another, and the dark ones were as genuinely divine as the bright. Perhaps (since Lawrence was so specially sensitive to the quality of dark godhead and so specially gifted to express it in art), perhaps even more divine. Anyhow, the polytheism was a democracy. This conception of human nature resulted in the formulation of two rather surprising doctrines, one ontological and the other ethical. The first is what I may call the Doctrine of Cosmic Pointlessness. 'There is no point. Life and Love are life and love, a bunch of violets is a bunch of violets, and to drag in the idea of a point is to ruin everything. Live and let live, love and let love, flower and fade, and follow the natural curve, which flows on, pointless.'

Ontological pointlessness has its ethical counterpart in the doctrine of insouciance. 'They simply are eaten up with caring. They are so busy caring about Fascism or Leagues of Nations or whether France is right or whether Marriage is threatened, that they never know where they are. They certainly never live on the spot where they are. They inhabit abstract space, the desert void of politics, principles, right and wrong, and so forth. They are doomed to be abstract. Talking to them is like trying to have a human relationship with the letter *x* in algebra.' As early as 1911 his advice to his sister was: 'Don't meddle with religion. I would leave all that alone, if I were you, and try to occupy myself fully in the present.'

Reading such passages—and they abound in every book that Lawrence wrote—I am always reminded of that section of the *Pensées*, in which Pascal speaks of the absurd distractions, with which men fill their leisure, so that there shall be no hole or cranny left for a serious thought to lodge itself in their consciousness. Lawrence also inveighs against *divertissements*, but not against the same *divertissements* as Pascal. For him, there were two great and criminal distractions. First, work, which he regarded as a mere stupefacient, like opium. ('Don't exhaust yourself too much,' he writes to an industrious friend; 'it is immoral.' Immoral, because, among other reasons, it is too easy, a shirking of man's first duty, which is to live. 'Think of the rest and peace, the positive sloth and luxury of idleness that work is.' Lawrence had a real puritan's disapproval of the vice of working. He attacked the gospel of work for the same reasons as Chrysippus attacked Aristotle's gospel of pure intellectualism—on the ground that it was, in the old Stoic's words, 'only a kind of amusement' and that real living was a more serious affair than labour or abstract speculations.) The other inexcusable distraction, in Lawrence's eyes, was 'spirituality,' that lofty musing on the ultimate nature of things which constitutes, for Pascal, 'the whole dignity and business of man.' Pascal was horrified that human beings could so far forget the infinite and the eternal as to 'dance and play the lute and sing and make verses.' Lawrence was no less appalled that they could so far forget all the delights and difficulties of immediate living as to remember eternity and infinity, to say nothing of the League of Nations and the Sanctity of Marriage. Both were great artists; and so each is able to convince us that he is at any rate partly right. Just how far each is right, this is not the place to discuss. Nor, indeed, is the question susceptible of a definite answer. 'Mental consciousness,' wrote Lawrence, 'is a purely individual affair. Some men are born to be highly and delicately conscious.' Some are not. Moreover, each of the ages of man has its suitable philosophy of life. (Lawrence's, I should say, was not a very good philosophy for old age or failing powers.) Besides, there are certain conjunctions of circumstances in which spontaneous living is the great distraction and certain others in which it is almost criminal to divert oneself with eternity or the League of Nations. Lawrence's peculiar genius was such that he insisted on spontaneous living to the exclusion of ideals and fixed principles; on intuition to the exclusion of abstract reasoning. Pascal, with a very different gift, evolved, inevitably, a very different philosophy.

Lawrence's dislike of abstract knowledge and pure spirituality made him a kind of mystical materialist. Thus, the moon affects him strongly; therefore it cannot be a 'stony cold world, like a world of our own gone cold. Nonsense. It is a globe of dynamic substance, like radium or phosphorus, coagulated upon a vivid pole of energy.' Matter must be intrinsically as lively as the mind which perceives it and is moved by the perception. Vivid and violent spiritual effects must have correspondingly vivid and violent material causes. And, conversely, any violent feeling or desire in the mind must be capable of producing violent effects upon external matter. Lawrence could not bring himself to believe that the spirit can be moved, moved if need be, to madness, without imparting the smallest corresponding movement to the external world. He was a subjectivist as well as a materialist; in other words, he believed in the possibility, in some form or another, of magic. Lawrence's mystical materialism found characteristic expression in the curious cosmology and physiology of his speculative essays, and in his restatement of the strange Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. To his mind, the survival of the spirit was not enough; for the spirit is a man's conscious identity, and Lawrence did not want to be always identical to himself; he wanted to know otherness—to know it by being it, know it in the living flesh, which is always essentially *other*. Therefore there must be a resurrection of the body.

Loyalty to his genius left him no choice; Lawrence had to insist on those mysterious forces of otherness which are scattered without, and darkly concentrated within, the body and mind of man. He had to, even though, by doing so, he imposed upon himself, as a writer of novels, a very serious handicap. For according to his view of things most of men's activities were more or less criminal distractions from the proper business of human living. He refused to write of such distractions; that is to say, he refused to write of the main activities of the contemporary world. But as though this drastic limitation of his subject were not sufficient, he went still further and, in some of his novels, refused even to write of human personalities in the accepted sense of the term. *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (and indeed to a lesser extent all his novels) are the practical applications of a theory, which is set forth in a very interesting and important letter to Edward Garnett, dated 5th June 1914. 'Somehow, that which is physic—non-human in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element, which causes one to conceive a character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent. The certain moral scheme is what I object to. In Turgenev, and in Tolstoi, and in Dostoevsky, the moral scheme into which all the characters fit—and it is nearly the same scheme—is, whatever the extraordinariness of the characters themselves, dull, old, dead. When Marinetti writes: 'It is the solidity of a blade of steel that is interesting by itself, that is, the incomprehending and inhuman alliance of its molecules in resistance to, let us say, a bullet. The heat of a piece of wood or iron is in fact more passionate, for us, than the laughter or tears of a woman'—then I know what he means. He is stupid, as an artist, for contrasting the heat of the iron and the laugh of the woman. Because what is interesting in the laugh of the woman is the same as the binding of the molecules of steel or their action in heat: it is the inhuman will, call it physiology, or like Marinetti, physiology of matter, that fascinates me. I don't so much care about what the woman *feels*—in the ordinary usage of the word. That presumes an *ego* to feel with. I only care about what the woman *is*—what she IS—inhumanly, physiologically, materially—according to the use of the word. . . . You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable *ego* of the character. There is another *ego*, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond—but I say, "Diamond, what!

This is carbon." And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.)'

The dangers and difficulties of this method are obvious. Criticizing Stendhal, Professor Saintsbury long since remarked on 'that psychological realism which is perhaps a more different thing from psychological reality than our clever ones for two generations have been willing to admit, or perhaps, able to perceive.'

Psychological reality, like physical reality, is determined by our mental and bodily make-up. Common sense, working on the evidence supplied by our unaided senses, postulates a world in which physical reality consists of such things as solid tables and chairs, bits of coal, water, air. Carrying its investigations further, science discovers that these samples of physical reality are 'really' composed of atoms of different elements, and these atoms, in their turn, are 'really' composed of more or less numerous electrons and protons arranged in a variety of patterns. Similarly, there is a common-sense, pragmatic conception of psychological reality; and also an un-commonsense conception. For ordinary practical purposes we conceive human beings as creatures with characters. But analysis of their behaviour can be carried so far, that they cease to have characters and reveal themselves as collections of psychological atoms. Lawrence (as might have been expected of a man who could always perceive the otherness behind the most reassuringly familiar phenomenon) took the un-commonsense view of psychology. Hence the strangeness of his novels; and hence also, it must be admitted, certain qualities of violent monotony and intense indistinctness, qualities which make some of them, for all their richness and their unexpected beauty, so curiously difficult to get through. Most of us are more interested in diamonds and coal than in undifferentiated carbon, however vividly described. I have known readers whose reaction to Lawrence's books was very much the same as Lawrence's own reaction to the theory of evolution. What he wrote meant nothing to them because they 'did not feel it *here*'—in the solar plexus. (That Lawrence, the hater of scientific knowing, should have applied to psychology methods which he himself compared to those of chemical analysis, may seem strange. But we must remember that his analysis was done, not intellectually, but by an immediate process of intuition; that he was able, as it were, to *feel* the carbon in diamonds and coal, to *taste* the hydrogen and oxygen in his glass of water.)

Lawrence, then, possessed, or, if you care to put it the other way round, was possessed by, a gift—a gift to which he was unshakably loyal. I have tried to show how the possession and the loyalty influenced his thinking and writing. How did they affect his life? The answer shall, be as far as possible, in Lawrence's own words. To Catherine Carswell Lawrence once wrote: 'I think you are the only woman I have met who is so intrinsically detached, so essentially separate and isolated, as to be a real writer or artist or recorder. Your relations with other people are only excursions from yourself. And to want children, and common human fulfilments, is rather a falsity for you, I think. You were never made to 'meet and mingle,' but to remain intact, *essentially*, whatever your experiences may be.'

Lawrence's knowledge of 'the artist' was manifestly personal knowledge. He knew by actual experience that 'the real writer' is an essentially separate being, who must not desire to meet and mingle and who betrays himself when he hankers too yearningly after common human fulfilments. All artists know these facts about their species, and many of them have recorded their knowledge. Recorded it, very often, with distress; being intrinsically detached is no joke. Lawrence certainly suffered his whole life from the essential solitude to which his gift condemned him. 'What ails me,' he wrote to the psychologist, Dr. Trigant Burrow, 'is the absolute frustration of my primeval societal instinct. . . . I think societal instinct much deeper than sex instinct—and societal repression much more devastating. There is no repression of the sexual individual comparable to the repression of the societal man in me, by the individual ego, my own and everybody else's. . . . Myself, I suffer badly from being so cut off. . . . At times one is *forced* to be essentially a hermit. I don't want to be. But anything else is either a personal tussle, or a money tussle; sickening: except, of course, just for ordinary acquaintance, which remains acquaintance. One has no real human relations—that is so devastating.' One has no real human relations: it is the complaint of every artist. The artist's first duty is to his genius, his *daimon*; he cannot serve two masters. Lawrence, as it happened, had an extraordinary gift for establishing an intimate relationship with almost any one he met. 'Here' (in the Bournemouth boarding-house where he was staying after his illness, in 1912), 'I get mixed up in people's lives so—it 's very interesting, sometimes a bit painful, often jolly. But I run to such close intimacy with folk, it is complicating. But I love to have myself in a bit of a tangle.' His love for his art was greater, however, than his love for a tangle; and whenever the tangle threatened to compromise his activities as an artist, it was the tangle that was sacrificed: he retired. Lawrence's only deep and abiding human relationship was with his wife. ('It is hopeless for me,' he wrote to a fellow artist, 'to try to do anything without I have a woman at the back of me. . . . Böcklin—or somebody like him—daren't sit in a café except with his back to the wall. I daren't sit in the world without a woman behind me. . . . A woman that I love sort of keeps me in direct communication with the unknown, in which otherwise I am a bit lost.') For the rest, he was condemned by his gift to an essential separateness. Often, it is true, he blamed the world for his exile. 'And it comes to this, that the *oneness* of mankind is destroyed in me (by the War). I am I, and you are you, and all heaven and hell lie in the chasm between. Believe me, I am infinitely hurt by being thus torn off from the body of mankind, but so it is and it is right.' It was right because, in reality, it was not the War that had torn him from the body of mankind; it was his own talent, the strange divinity to which he owed his primary allegiance. 'I will not live any more in this time,' he wrote on another occasion. 'I know what it is. I reject it. As far I possibly can, I will stand outside this time. I will live my life and, if possible, be happy. Though the whole world slides in horror down into the bottomless pit . . . I believe that the highest virtue is to be happy, living in the greatest truth, not submitting to the falsehood of these personal times.' The adjective is profoundly significant. Of all the possible words of disparagement which might be applied to our uneasy age 'personal' is surely about the last that would occur to most of us. To Lawrence it was the first. His gift was a gift of feeling and rendering the unknown, the mysteriously other. To one possessed by such a gift, almost any age would have seemed unduly and dangerously personal. He had to reject and escape. But when he had escaped, he could not help deploring the absence of 'real human relationships.' Spasmodically, he tried to establish contact with the body of mankind. There were the recurrent projects for colonies in remote corners of the earth; they all fell through. There were his efforts to join existing political organizations; but somehow 'I seem to have lost touch altogether with the "Progressive" clique. In Croydon, the Socialists are so stupid and the Fabians so flat.' (Not only in Croydon, alas.) Then, during the War, there was his plan to co-operate with a few friends to take independent political action; but 'I would like to be remote, in Italy, writing my soul's words. To have to speak in the body is a violation to me.' And in the end he wouldn't violate himself; he remained aloof, remote, 'essentially separate.' 'It isn't scenery one lives by,' he wrote from Cornwall in 1916, 'but the freedom of moving about alone.' How acutely he suffered from this freedom by which he lived! *Kangaroo* describes a later stage of the debate between the solitary artist and the man who wanted social responsibilities and contact with the body of mankind. Lawrence, like the hero of his novel, decided against contact. He was by nature not a leader of men, but a prophet, a voice crying in the wilderness—the wilderness of his own isolation. The desert was his place, and yet he felt himself an exile in it. To Rolf Gardiner he wrote, in 1926: 'I should love to be connected with something, with some few people, in something. As far as anything *matters*, I have always been very much alone, and regretted it. But I can't belong to clubs, or societies, or Freemasons, or any other damn thing. So if there is, with you, an activity I *can* belong to, I shall thank my stars. But, of course, I shall be wary beyond words, of committing myself.' He was in fact so wary that he never committed himself, but died remote and unconnected as he had lived. The *daimon* would not allow it to be otherwise.

(Whether Lawrence might not have been happier if he had disobeyed his *daimon* and forced himself at least into mechanical and external connection with the body of mankind, I forbear to speculate. Spontaneity is not the only and infallible secret of happiness; nor is a 'would-be' existence necessarily disastrous. But this is by the way.)

It was, I think, the sense of being cut off that sent Lawrence on his restless wanderings round the earth. His travels were at once a flight and a search; a search for some society with which he could establish contact, for a world where the times were not personal and conscious knowing had not yet perverted living; a search and at the same time a flight from the miseries and evils of the society into which he had been born, and for which, in spite of his artist's detachment, he could not help feeling profoundly responsible. He felt himself 'English in the teeth of all the world, even in the teeth of England': that was why he had to go to Ceylon and Australia and Mexico. He could not have felt so intensely English in England without involving himself in corporative political action, without belonging and being attached; but to attach himself was something he could not bring himself to do, something that the artist in him felt as a violation. He was at once too English and too intensely an artist to stay at home. 'Perhaps it is necessary for me to try these places, perhaps it is my destiny to know the world. It only excites the outside of me. The inside it leaves more isolated and stoic than ever. That 's how it is. It is all a form of running away from oneself and the great problems, all this wild west and the strange Australia. But I try to keep quite clear. One forms not the faintest inward attachment, especially here in America.'

His search was as fruitless as his flight was ineffective. He could not escape either from his homesickness or his sense of responsibility; and he never found a society to which he could belong. In a kind of despair, he plunged yet deeper into the surrounding mystery, into the dark night of that otherness whose essence and symbol is the sexual experience. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover* Lawrence wrote the epilogue to his travels and, from his long and fruitless experience of flight and search, drew what was, for him, the inevitable moral. It is a strange and beautiful book; but inexpressibly sad. But then so, at bottom, was its author's life.

Lawrence's psychological isolation resulted, as we have seen, in his seeking physical isolation from the body of mankind. This physical isolation reacted upon his thoughts. 'Don't mind if I am impertinent,' he wrote to one of his correspondents at the end of a rather dogmatic letter. 'Living here alone one gets so different—sort of ex-cathedra.' To live in isolation, above the medley, has its advantages; but it also imposes certain penalties. Those who take a bird's-eye view of the world often see clearly and comprehensively; but they tend to ignore all tiresome details, all the difficulties of social life and, ignoring, to judge too sweepingly and to condemn too lightly. Nietzsche spent his most fruitful years perched on the tops of mountains, or plunged in the yet more abysmal solitude of boarding-houses by the Mediterranean. That was why, a delicate and sensitive man, he could be so bloodthirstily censorious—so wrong, for all his gifts, as well as so right. From the deserts of New Mexico, from rustic Tuscany or Sicily, from the Australian bush, Lawrence observed and judged and advised the distant world of men. The judgments, as might be expected, were often sweeping and violent; the advice, though admirable so far as it went, inadequate. Political advice from even the most greatly gifted of religious innovators is always inadequate; for it is never, at bottom, advice about politics, but always about something else. Differences in quantity, if sufficiently great, produce differences of quality. This sheet of paper, for example, is qualitatively different from the electrons of which it is composed. An analogous difference divides the politician's world from the world of the artist, or the moralist, or the religious teacher. 'It is the business of the artist,' writes Lawrence, 'to follow it (the War) to the heart of the individual fighters—not to talk in armies and nations and numbers—but to track it home—home—their war—and it 's at the bottom of almost every Englishman's heart—the war—the desire of war—the *will* to war—and at the bottom of every German heart.' But an appeal to the individual heart can have very little effect on politics, which is a science of averages. An actuary can tell you how many people are likely to commit suicide next year; and no artist or moralist or Messiah can, by an appeal to the individual heart, prevent his forecast from being remarkably correct. If the things which are Cæsar's differ from the things which are God's, it is because Cæsar's things are numbered by the thousands and millions, whereas God's things are single individual souls. The things of Lawrence's Dark God were not even individual souls; they were the psychological atoms whose patterned coming together constitutes a soul. When Lawrence offers political advice, it refers to matters which are not really political at all. The political world of enormous numbers was to him a nightmare, and he fled from it. Primitive communities are so small that their politics are essentially unpolitical; that, for Lawrence, was one of their greatest charms. Looking back from some far-away and underpopulated vantage point at the enormous, innumerable modern world, he was appalled by what he saw. He condemned, he advised, but at bottom and finally he felt himself impotent to deal with Caesar's alien and inhuman problems. 'I wish there were miracles,' was his final despairing comment. 'I am tired of the old laborious way of working things to their conclusions.' But, alas, there are no miracles, and faith, even the faith of a man of genius, moves no mountains.

Enough of explanation and interpretation. To those who knew Lawrence, not *why*, but *that* he was what he happened to be, is the important fact. I remember very clearly my first meeting with him. The place was London, the time 1915. But Lawrence's passionate talk was of the geographically remote and of the personally very near. Of the horrors in the middle distance—war, winter, the town—he would not speak. For he was on the point, so he imagined, of setting off to Florida—to Florida, where he was going to plant that colony of escape, of which up to the last he never ceased to dream. Sometimes the name and site of this seed of a happier and different world were purely fanciful. It was called Rananim, for example, and was an island like Prospero's. Sometimes it had its place on the map and its name was Florida, Cornwall, Sicily, Mexico, and again, for a time, the English countryside. That wintry afternoon in 1915 it was Florida. Before tea was over he asked me if I would join the colony, and though I was an intellectually cautious young man, not at all inclined to enthusiasms, though Lawrence had startled and embarrassed me with sincerities of a kind to which my upbringing had not accustomed me, I answered yes.

Fortunately, no doubt, the Florida scheme fell through. Cities of God have always crumbled; and Lawrence's city—his village, rather, for he hated cities—his Village of the Dark God would doubtless have disintegrated like all the rest. It was better that it should have remained, as it was always to remain, a project and a hope. And I knew this even as I said I would join the colony. But there was something about Lawrence which made such knowledge, when one was in his presence, curiously irrelevant. He might propose impracticable schemes, he might say or write things that were demonstrably incorrect or even, on occasion (as when he talked about science), absurd. But to a very considerable extent it didn't matter. What mattered was always Lawrence himself, was the fire that burned within him, that glowed with so strange and marvellous a radiance in almost all he wrote.

My second meeting with Lawrence took place some years later, during one of his brief revisitings of that after-war England, which he had come so much to dread and to dislike. Then in 1925, while in India, I received a letter from Spotorno. He had read some essays I had written on Italian travel; said he liked them; suggested a meeting. The next year we were in Florence and so was he. From that time, till his death, we were often together—at Florence, at Forte dei Marmi, for a whole winter at Diablerets, at Bandol, in Paris, at Chexbres, at Forte again, and finally at Vence where he died.

In a spasmodically kept diary I find this entry under the date of 27th December 1927: 'Lunched and spent the p.m. with the Lawrences. D H. L. in admirable form, talking wonderfully. He is one of the few people I feel real respect and admiration for. Of most other eminent people I have met I feel that at any rate I belong to the same species as they do. But this man has something different and superior in kind, not degree.'

'Different and superior in kind.' I think almost every one who knew him well must have felt that Lawrence was this. A being, somehow, of another order, more sensitive, more highly conscious, more capable of feeling than even the most gifted of common men. He had, of course, his weaknesses and defects; he had his intellectual limitations—limitations which he seemed to have deliberately imposed upon himself. But these weaknesses and defects and limitations did not affect the fact of his superior otherness. They diminished him quantitively, so to speak; whereas the otherness was qualitative. Spill half your glass of wine and what remains is still wine. Water, however full the glass may be, is always tasteless and without colour.

To be with Lawrence was a kind of adventure, a voyage of discovery into newness and otherness. For, being himself of a different order, he inhabited a different universe from that of common men—a brighter and intenser world, of which, while he spoke, he would make you free. He looked at things with the eyes, so it seemed, of a man who had been at the brink of death and to whom, as he emerges from the darkness, the world reveals itself as unfathomably beautiful and mysterious. For Lawrence, existence was one continuous convalescence; it was as though he were newly re-born from a mortal illness every day of his life. What these convalescent eyes saw his most casual speech would reveal. A walk with him in the country was a walk through that marvellously rich and significant landscape which is at once the background and the principal personage of all his novels. He seemed to know, by personal experience, what it was like to be a tree or a daisy or a breaking wave or even the mysterious moon itself. He could get inside the skin of an animal and tell you in the most convincing detail how it felt and how, dimly, inhumanly, it thought. Of Black-Eyed Susan, for example, the cow at his New Mexican ranch, he was never tired of speaking, nor was I ever tired of listening to his account of her character and her bovine philosophy.

'He sees,' Vernon Lee once said to me, 'more than a human being ought to see. Perhaps,' she added, 'that 's why he hates humanity so much.' Why also he loved it so much. And not only humanity: nature too, and even the supernatural. For wherever he looked, he saw more than a human being ought to see; saw more and therefore loved and hated more. To be with him was to find oneself transported to one of the frontiers of human consciousness. For an inhabitant of the safe metropolis of thought and feeling it was a most exciting experience.

One of the great charms of Lawrence as a companion was that he could never be bored and so could never be boring. He was able to absorb himself completely in what he was doing at the moment; and he regarded no task as too humble for him to undertake, nor so trivial that it was not worth his while to do it well. He could cook, he could sew, he could darn a stocking and milk a cow, he was an efficient wood-cutter and a good hand at embroidery, fires always burned when he had laid them and a floor, after Lawrence had scrubbed it, was thoroughly clean. Moreover, he possessed what is, for a highly strung and highly intelligent man, an even more remarkable accomplishment: he knew how to do nothing. He could just sit and be perfectly content. And his contentment, while one remained in his company, was infectious.

As infectious as Lawrence's contented placidity were his high spirits and his laughter. Even in the last years of his life, when his illness had got the upper hand and was killing him inchmeal, Lawrence could still laugh, on occasion, with something of the old and exuberant gaiety. Often, alas, towards the end, the laughter was bitter, and the high spirits almost terrifyingly savage. I have heard him sometimes speak of men and their ways with a kind of demoniac mockery, to which it was painful, for all the extraordinary brilliance and profundity of what he said, to listen. The secret consciousness of his dissolution filled the last years of his life with an overpowering sadness. (How tragically the splendid curve of the letters droops, at the end, towards the darkness!) It was, however, in terms of anger that he chose to express this sadness. Emotional indecency always shocked him profoundly, and, since anger seemed to him less indecent as an emotion than a resigned or complaining melancholy, he preferred to be angry. He took his revenge on the fate that had made him sad by fiercely deriding everything. And because the sadness of the slowly dying man was so unspeakably deep, his mockery was frighteningly savage. The laughter of the earlier Lawrence and, on occasion, as I have said, even the later Lawrence was without bitterness and wholly delightful.

Vitality has the attractiveness of beauty, and in Lawrence there was a continuously springing fountain of vitality. It went on welling up in him, leaping, now and then, into a great explosion of bright foam and iridescence, long after the time when, by all the rules of medicine, he should have been dead. For the last two years he was like a flame burning on in miraculous disregard of the fact that there was no more fuel to justify its existence. One grew, in spite of constantly renewed alarms, so well accustomed to seeing the flame blazing away, self-fed, in its broken and empty lamp that one almost came to believe that the miracle would be prolonged, indefinitely. But it could not be. When, after several months of separation, I saw him again at Vence in the early spring of 1930, the miracle was at an end, the flame guttering to extinction. A few days later it was quenched.

# WRITERS AND READERS

In Europe and America universal primary education has created a reading public which is practically co-extensive with the adult population. Demand has called forth a correspondingly huge supply: twenty thousand million pounds of wood pulp and esparto grass are annually blackened with printer's ink; the production of newspapers takes rank, in many countries, among the major industries; in English, French, and German alone, forty thousand new books are published every year.

A vast activity of writers, a vast and hungry passivity of readers. And when the two come together, what happens? How much and in what ways do the readers respond to the writers? What is the extent, what the limitations, of the influence exercised by writers on their readers? How do extraneous circumstances affect that influence? What are the laws of its waxing and its waning? Hard questions; and the more one thinks about them, the harder they seem. But seeing that they are of intimate concern to all of us (for all of us are readers, with an annual average consumption of probably a million words a years), it will be worth while at least to look for the answers.

The relations existing between scientific writers and their readers are governed by rules agreed upon in advance. So far as we are concerned, there is no problem of scientific literature; and I shall therefore make no further reference to the subject. For the purposes of this analysis, non-scientific writing may be divided into three main classes. In the first we place that vast corpus of literature which is not even intended to have any positive effect upon the reader—all that doughy, woolly, anodyne writing that exists merely to fill a gap of leisure, to kill time and prevent thought, to deaden and diffuse emotion. To a considerable extent reading has become, for almost all of us, an addiction, like cigarette smoking. We read, most of the time, not because we wish to instruct ourselves, not because we long to have our feelings touched and our imagination fired, but because reading is one of our bad habits, because we suffer when we have time to spare and no printed matter with which to plug the void.

Deprived of their newspapers or a novel, reading-addicts will fall back on cookery books, on the literature that is wrapped round bottles of patent medicine, on those instructions for keeping the contents crisp which are printed on the outside of boxes of breakfast cereals. On anything. Of this kind of literature—the literature that exists merely because the second nature of habituated readers abhors a vacuum—it is unnecessary to say more than that there is a great deal of it and that it effectively performs its function.

Into the second class I put the two main types of propagandist literature—that which aims at modifying the religious and ethical opinions and the personal behaviour of its readers, and that which aims at modifying their social, political, and economic opinions and behaviour.

For the sake of convenience, and because it must be given a name, we will call the third class *imaginative literature.* Such literature does not set out to be specifically propagandist, but may none the less profoundly affect its readers' habits of thought, feeling, and action.

Let us begin with propagandists.

What hosts of them there are! All over the world thousands of men and women pass their whole lives denouncing, instructing, commanding, cajoling, imploring their fellows. With what results? One finds it rather hard to say. Most propagandists do their work in the dark, draw bows at a venture. They write; but they don't know how far they will succeed in influencing their readers, nor what are the best means for influencing them, nor how long their influence will last. There is, as yet, no science of propaganda.

This fact may seem the more surprising when we reflect that there is something not far removed from a science of advertising. In the course of years advertisers have come to be fairly expert at selling things to the public. They know accurately enough the potentialities and limitations of different kinds of propaganda—what you can do, for example, by mere statement and repetition; by appeals to such well-organized sentiments as snobbery and the urge towards social conformity; by playing on the animal instincts, such as greed, lust and especially fear in all its forms, from the fear of sickness and death to the fear of being ugly, absurd or physically repugnant to one's fellows.

If, then, commercial propagandists know their business so well, why is it that ethical and political propagandists should know theirs on the whole so badly? The answer is that the problems with which the advertisers have to deal are fundamentally unlike the problems which confront moralists and, in most cases, politicians. A great deal of advertising is concerned with matters of no importance whatsoever. Thus, I need soap; but it makes not the smallest difference to me whether I buy soap manufactured by X or soap manufactured by Y. This being so, I can allow myself to be influenced in my choice by such entirely irrelevant considerations as the sex appeal of the girl who smiles so alluringly from X's posters, or the puns and comic drawings on Y's. In many cases, of course, I do not need the commodity at all. But as I have a certain amount of money to spare and am possessed by the strange desire to collect unnecessary objects, I succumb easily to any one who asks me to buy superfluities and luxuries. In these cases commercial propaganda is an invitation to give in to a natural or acquired craving. In no circumstances does it ever call upon the reader to resist a temptation; always it begs him to succumb. It is not very difficult to persuade people to do what they are all longing to do.

When readers are asked to buy luxuries and superfluities, or to choose between two brands of the same indispensable necessity, nothing serious is at stake. Advertising is concerned, in these cases, with secondary and marginal values. In other cases, however, it matters or seems to matter a great deal whether the reader allows himself to be influenced by the commercial propagandist or no. Suffering from some pain or physical disability, he is told of the extraordinary cures effected by M's pills or N's lotion. Naturally, he buys at once. In such cases the advertiser has only to make the article persuasively known; the reader's urgent need does the rest.

Ethical and political propagandists have a very different task. The business of the moralist is to persuade people to overcome their egotism and their personal cravings, in the interest either of a supernatural order, or of their own higher selves, or of society. The philosophies underlying the ethical teaching may vary; but the practical advice remains in all cases the same, and this advice is in the main unpleasant; whereas the advice given by commercial propagandists is in the main thoroughly pleasant. There is only one fly in the ointment offered by commercial propagandists; they want your money. Some political propagandists are also moralists; they invite their readers to repress their cravings and set limits to their egotistical impulses for the sake of some political cause which is to bring happiness in the future. Others demand no personal effort from their readers—merely their adherence to a cause, whose success will save the world automatically and, so to speak, from the outside. The first has to persuade people to do something which is on the whole disagreeable. The second has to persuade them of the correctness of a policy which, though it imposes no immediate discomforts, admittedly brings no immediate rewards. Both must compete with other propagandists. The art of political propaganda is much less highly developed than the art of commercial propaganda; it is not surprising.

Long experience has taught the moralists that the mere advertising of virtue is not enough to make people virtuous. During the last few thousands of years, incalculable quantities of hortatory literature have been produced in every civilized country of the world. The moral standard remains, none the less, pretty low. True, if all this ethical propaganda had never been made, the standard might be even lower. We can't tell. I suspect, however, that if we could measure it, we should find that the mechanical efficiency of ethical propaganda through literature was seldom in excess of one per cent. In individual cases and where, for some reason, circumstances are peculiarly favourable, written propaganda may be more efficient than in others. But, in general, if people behave as well as they do, it is not because they have read about good behaviour and the social or metaphysical reasons for being virtuous; it is because they have been subjected, during childhood, to a more or less intensive, more or less systematic training in good behaviour. The propagandists of morality do not rely exclusively or even mainly on the written word.

Unlike the advertisers, political and social propagandists generally work in the dark and are quite uncertain as to the kind of effects they will be able to produce upon their readers. Propagandists themselves seldom admit this fact. Like the rest of us, they like to insist upon their own importance. Moreover, there has been a tendency among historians and political theorists to lend support to their claims. This is not surprising. Being themselves professional writers, historians and political theorists are naturally prone to exaggerate the significance of literature. In most studies of modern history, a great deal of space is devoted to the analysis of different political and economic theories; and it is tacitly or explicitly assumed that the propagation of these theories in the writings of literary men had a more or less decisive influence on the course of history. In other and more reverberant words, the literary men are credited with having 'built Nineveh with their sighing and Babel itself with their mirth.' Let us try to discover how far the facts confirm or invalidate this proud claim.

Consider the propagandist activities of the periodical press. Rich men and politicians have a fixed belief that if they can control the press they will be able to control public opinion—to control it even in a country where democratic institutions are allowed to function without gross interference. They buy up newspapers—partly in order to make money (for the production of newspapers is a very profitable industry), but mainly in the confident hope of being able to persuade the electorate to do what they want it to do. But in fact, as recent history proves, they fail just as often as they succeed. Thus, we see that the electoral successes of the English Liberal Party before the War, and of the Labour Party after, were won in the teeth of opposition by a newspaper press that was and is overwhelmingly conservative. It can be shown by a simple arithmetical calculation that there must be millions of English men and women who regularly read a tory newspaper and regularly vote against the tories. The same is true of France, where it is clear that many readers of the conservative press vote socialist and even communist at elections. We are led to two conclusions: first, that most people choose their daily paper, not for its opinions, but for its entertainingness, its capacity to amuse and fill the vacancies of leisure. Second, that written propaganda is less efficacious than the habits and prejudices, the class loyalties and professional interests of the readers.

Nor must we forget that propaganda is largely at the mercy of circumstances. Sometimes circumstances fight against propaganda; at other times, they fight no less effectively on its side. Thus, during the khaki election which returned the first Coalition Government under Lloyd George, and during the gold-standard election of 1931, circumstances fought on the same side as the majority of press propagandists—and fought with tremendous effect. Significant, in this context, is the case of Allied propaganda during the World War. Up till the summer of 1918 the propaganda designed to undermine the will-to-fight of the German troops was almost perfectly ineffective. During and after that summer, when hunger and a series of unsuccessful battles had prepared the ground for it, this propaganda achieved its purpose. But the leaflets which Lord Northcliffe's organization scattered with such good effects during July and August could have done absolutely nothing to discourage the German troops during their victorious offensive against Saint-Quentin in the month of March.

Propaganda by even the greatest masters of style is as much at the mercy of circumstances as propaganda by the worst journalists. Ruskin's diatribes against machinery and the factory system influenced only by those who were in an economic position similar to his own; on those who profited by machinery and the factory system they had no influence whatever. From the beginning of the twelfth century to the time of the Council of Trent, denunciations of ecclesiastical and monastic abuses were poured forth almost without intermission. And yet, in spite of the eloquence of great writers and great churchmen, like St. Bernard and St. Bonaventura, nothing was done. It needed the circumstances of the Reformation to produce the counter-Reformation. Upon his contemporaries the influence of Voltaire was enormous. Lucian had as much talent as Voltaire and wrote of religion with the same disintegrating irony. And yet, so far as we can judge, his writings were completely without effect. The Syrians of the second century were busily engaged in converting themselves to Christianity and a number of other Oriental religions; Lucian's irony fell on ears that were deaf to everything but theology and occultism. In France, during the first half of the eighteenth century, a peculiar combination of historical circumstances had predisposed the educated to a certain religious and political scepticism; people were ready and eager to welcome Voltaire's attacks on the existing order of things. Political and religious propaganda is effective, it would seem, only upon those who are already partly or entirely convinced of its truth.

Let us consider a modern example. Since the war two well-written and persuasive pieces of propaganda have figured among the very best of best sellers—I refer to Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*. In Europe and America many millions of people read the German's indictment of war and the Englishman's plea for internationalism. With what results? It is hard indeed to say. All that we can be sure of is that nationalistic feeling was never so acutely inflamed as it is to-day and the expenditure on armaments never higher. Once more, circumstances have been more effective in moulding men's minds than conscious literary propagandists. The influence of Wells and Remarque, which was doubtless considerable at the time of the appearance of their books, lasted only as long as the post-War disgust with fighting and the post-War era of prosperity. A new generation, whose members had no first-hand knowledge of war, came to maturity, and along with it appeared the great depression. In the desperate effort to preserve a local prosperity, governments raised tariffs, established quotas, subsidized exports. Economic nationalism was everywhere intensified. For every people all foreigners were automatically transformed into enemies. At the same time despair and the sense of having been wronged, of being the victims of a monstrous injustice, were driving millions to seek consolation and a vicarious triumph in the religion of nationalism. Why, we may ask in passing, did these unhappy victims of war choose nationalism as their consolation rather than Christianity? The reason is to be sought, not in the superior efficacy of nationalist propaganda, but in the historical situation as a whole. The prestige of science is not sufficiently great to induce men to apply scientific methods to the affairs of social and individual existence; it is great enough, however, to make them reject the tenets of the transcendental religions. For a large part of the population, science has made the Christian dogmas intellectually unacceptable. Contemporary superstition is therefore compelled to assume a positivistic form. The desire to worship persists, but since modern men find it impossible to believe in any but observable entities, it follows that they must vent this desire upon gods that can be actually seen and heard, or whose existence can at least be easily inferred from the facts of immediate experience. Nations and dictators are only too clearly observable. It is on these tribal deities that the longing to worship now vents itself. One of the oddest and most unexpected results of scientific progress has been the general reversion from monotheism to local idolatries. The beginnings of this process are clearly observable among the German philosophers at the opening of the nineteenth century. Take a Moravian Brother; endow him with a great deal of intelligence, and subject him to a good eighteenth-century education and a first-hand experience of invasion and foreign tyranny; the result will be a deeply religious man, incapable of finding intellectual satisfaction in the traditional Christianity of his childhood, but ready to pour out all his devotion, all his will-to-worship, upon the nation. In a single word, the result with be Fichte. In Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, the religion of Nazism is to a great extent anticipated. But whereas the Nazis have invented a jargon of their own, Fichte, it is significant, still employs the language of Pietism. He writes of patriotic experiences in the same words as were used by the Moravians to describe religious experiences. In Fichte, as well as in a number of his less eminent contemporaries, we can actually study an intermediate type between two distinct species—the revivalist Christian and the revivalist nation-worshipper. Since the introduction of universal education innumerable people have gone through a process akin to that which caused Fichte to become dissatisfied with the Pietism of his childhood and made it natural for him to seek another outlet for his will-to-worship. The Napoleonic invasion gave intensity to Fichte's religion of nationalism; defeat and an imperfect victory in the World War have done the same for the Germans and Italians of our own generation. In a word, the historical circumstances of recent years have conspired to intensify nationalism and throw discredit on internationalism, whether religious or political, whether based on Christian theology or a rationalistic view of the world. At the same time, of course, governments have deliberately fostered nationalistic fervour to serve their own political purposes. To these causes must be added the apparently normal human tendency to delight in periodical changes of intellectual and emotional fashion. The very popularity of an author during a certain period is a reason why he should become unpopular later on. The conversations due to the preaching of Wells and Remarque were in general superficial and short-lived. It is not to be wondered at.

But now, let us suppose for the sake of argument, that these conversions had been for the most part profound and, in spite of changed conditions, lasting. Would that fact have greatly altered the present situation, so long as the world's rulers had remained unconverted? It is possible to argue that the really influential book is not that which converts ten millions of casual readers, but rather that which converts the very few who, at any given moment, succeed in seizing power. Marx and Sorel have been influential in the modern world, not so much because they were best sellers (Sorel in particular was not at all a widely read author), but because among their few readers were two men, called respectively Lenin and Mussolini. In a less spectacular way, but still profoundly, the writings of Jeremy Bentham affected the course of nineteenth-century history. Their circulation was not large; but they counted among their readers men like Chadwick, Grote, Romilly, Brougham—administrators, educationists, legal reformers, who did their best to put into practice what Bentham had preached. It may be that the future ruler of some great country will grow up with a passion for Wells. In that case, *The Outline* will be not merely a record of past history, but indirectly a maker of history to come. Up to the present, in spite of its circulation it has not affected the course of history.

Social and political propaganda, as I have said, is effective, as a rule, only upon those whom circumstances have partly or completely convinced of its truth. In other words, it is influential only when it is a rationalization of the desires, sentiments, prejudices or interests of those to whom it is addressed. A theology or a political theory may be defined as an intellectual device for enabling people to do in cold blood things which, without the theology or the theory, they could only do in the heat of passion. Circumstances, whether external or internal and purely psychological, produce in certain persons a state of discontent, for example, a desire for change, a passionate aspiration for something new. These emotional states may find occasional outlet in violent but undirected activity. But now comes the writer with a theology or a political theory, in terms of which these vague feelings can be rationalized. The energy developed by the prevailing passions of the masses is given a direction and at the same time strengthened and made continuous. Sporadic outbursts are converted by the rationalization into purposive and unremitting activity. The mechanism of successful propaganda may be roughly summed up as follows. Men accept the propagandist's theology or political theory, because it apparently justifies and explains the sentiments and desires evoked in them by the circumstances. The theory may, of course, be completely absurd from a scientific point of view; but this is of no importance so long as men believe it to be true. Having accepted the theory, men will work in obedience to its precepts even in times of emotional tranquillity. Moreover, the theory will often cause them to perform in cold blood acts which they would hardly have performed even in a state of emotional excitement.

Our nature abhors a moral and intellectual vacuum. Passion and self-interest may be our chief motives; but we hate to admit the fact even to ourselves. We are not happy unless our acts of passion can be made to look at though they were dictated by reason, unless self-interest be explained and embellished so as to seem to be idealistic. Particular grievances call not only for redress, but also for the formulation of universally valid reasons why they should be redressed. Particular cravings cry aloud to be legitimized in terms of a rational philosophy and a traditionally acceptable ethic. The moral and intellectual vacuum is perpetually in process of formation, and it sucks into itself whatever explanatory or justificatory writing happens at the moment to be available. Clean or dirty, brackish or sweet —any water will serve the turn of a pump that has been emptied of its air. And, analogously, any philosophical writing, good, bad or indifferent, will serve the turn of people, who are under the compulsion of desire or of self-interest, and who consequently feel the need of intellectual and moral justification. Hence the extraordinary success, at a particular historical moment, of books that, to a later generation, seem almost completely valueless; hence the temporary importance and power of manifestly second-rate and negligible writers. Let us consider a concrete example. The organization of eighteenth-century French society was hopelessly inefficient, and its pattern so anachronistic that great numbers of individual Frenchmen, unable to fit into the scheme of things, suffered acute discomfort. The sense of grievance and the desire for change were intense; and correspondingly intense was the desire for a philosophy that should rationalize this desire and legitimize this grievance in terms of pure reason and absolute justice. Yearning to be filled, the moral and intellectual vacuum sucked into itself whatever writings were available. Among these was the *De l'Esprit* of Helvétius. This is a thoroughly bad book, full of preposterous stuff. But though obviously untrue, some of its theses (such as that which affirmed the equality of all intellects and the consequent possibility of transforming any child at will into a Newton or a Raphael) were well suited to rationalize and justify the contemporary claims for political, religious, and economic reform. During a few years the book was invested with a significance, and exercised an influence, which its intrinsic literary and philosophical merits could not justify. Its fortune was made, not by the ability of its author, but by the needs of its readers.

There have been writers whose influence depended neither on their own powers, nor yet on the necessities of their readers, but simply upon fashion. To us, the writings of most of the original fourteenth- and fifteenth-century humanists seem wholly unreadable. Nor are we singular in our judgment; for within a hundred years their works had fallen into an almost complete oblivion. And yet, for their contemporaries, these works were exciting and persuasive. The fact that a man could turn out a tolerably specious imitation of Cicero or Sallust was, for two whole generations of Renaissance readers, a sufficient reason for attaching importance to what he wrote. Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan was often heard to say that a thousand Florentine cavalry could not do him so much harm as a single Latin letter from the Chancellor of Florence, the humanist Coluccio Salutati. The rediscovery of ancient literature was an event of profound significance. It is easy to understand why so much importance came to be attached, during the fifteenth century, to pure Latinity: why it was that scholars like Valla and Poggio should have wielded such extraordinary power. But the fashion which, a century later, invested the ruffianly Pietro Aretino with the almost magical prestige that had belonged to the original humanists is wholly unaccountable. Aretino was a lively writer, some of whose works can still be read with interest. But why he should have wielded the influence that he did, and why all the kings and princes in Europe should have thought it worth while to pay him blackmail, are mysteries which we cannot explain, except by saying that for some reason he became the mode.

At every period of history certain writings are regarded by all or some members of a given society as being *ex hypothesi* true. They are therefore charged with an unquestionable authority. To show that this authority is on the side of the cause he supports has always been one of the propagandist's tasks. Where it is not possible for him to make them serve his purposes the propagandist has to discredit the existing authorities. The devil opens the attack by quoting Scripture; then, when the quotations fail him, trots out the Higher Criticism and shows that Scripture has no more authority than the *Pickwick Papers*. At any given moment there are certain fixed landmarks of authority; the propaganda of the period has to orientate itself in relation to these landmarks. Correct orientation to existing authority is one of the conditions making for success of propaganda.

We see, then, that the effectiveness of propaganda is determined by the circumstances of the time when it is written. These circumstances are of two kinds—circumstances external to the individual, and internal or psychological circumstances. External circumstances may change catastrophically, as during a war; or gradually, as when means of production are altered and economic prosperity is increased or diminished. Changes in external circumstances are, of course, accompanied by changes in internal circumstances. But internal circumstances may also change on their own account, independently, to a certain extent, of external circumstances and according to an autonomous rhythm of their own. History pursues an undulatory course; and these undulations are the result, to some extent at least, of the tendency displayed by human beings to react, after a certain time, away from the prevailing habits of thought and feeling towards other habits. (This process is greatly complicated by the fact that in modern heterogeneous societies there are numerous co-existing groups with different habits of thought and feeling. But it is unnecessary to discuss these complications here.) The autonomous nature of psychological undulations is confirmed by the facts of history. Thus the ardour of all violently active religious and political movements has generally given place to relative indifference and worldliness after a period of anything from a few months to twenty-five years.

'All active religions,' writes Professor Crane Brinton, in the concluding paragraph of his recently published *Decade of Revolution*, 'tend to become inactive within a generation at most. The wise, experienced and consistently inactive religious institution known as the Roman Catholic Church has always been threatened by outbreaks of active religion. Until Luther, at least, such outbreaks were tamed, strait-jacketed with laws and institutions. . . . Since the Reformation the great outbreaks of active religion have taken place outside the Church of Rome. Of these, the earliest, Calvinism, has long since been sobered. . . . The second, Jacobinism, has in the Third Republic made its compromise with the flesh. . . . The third, Marxism, would appear to the outsider to be entering the inactive stage, at least in Russia.' It is worth while to illustrate the undulations of history by a few concrete examples. It took the Franciscan movement about twenty years to lose the passion of its early zeal. Francis founded his first cell in 1209, and the Bull by which Gregory IX set aside his Testament and permitted trustees to hold and administer property for the benefit of the Order was promulgated in 1230. The French Revolution had its Thermidorean reaction after only five years, Savonarola ruled the city of Florence for eight years; but the popular reaction against his movement of religious and moral reform had begun some time before the end. The great Kentucky Revival lasted from 1797 to about 1805; but the Welsh Revival of 1904 was over in two years.

It is probably true to say that movements make up in duration what they lack in intensity. Thus, it seems to have taken a full generation for educated Englishmen to react away from the genteel religious scepticism which prevailed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Addison complained that in his time the very appearances of Christianity had vanished; Leibniz could record the fact that in England even 'natural religion' was languishing. And these are opinions which the facts confirm. The literature of unbelief was as popular as fiction. For example, Woolston's Discourses against miracles sold upwards of thirty thousand copies. But a change was at hand. In a letter dated 1776 and addressed to Gibbon on the publication of the first volume of his history, Hume summed up his impressions of contemporary English thought in the following words: 'Among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England prognosticates the fall of philosophy and decay of taste.' Fourteen years later, in 1790, Burke remarked that 'not one man born within the last forty years has read a word of Collins, Toland, Tyndal, or of any of that flock of so-called free-thinkers. Atheism is not only against our reason; it is against our instinct.' Forty years is probably a pretty accurate computation. Charles Wesley was converted in 1736 and John in 1738. By 1750 the movement of which those conversions were at once a symptom and a cause must have gone far enough to spoil the market for deistic literature. After several minor fluctuations, a new period of educated scepticism set in about the middle of the nineteenth century and was succeeded towards the end of the century by another reaction towards faith. Owing, however, to the assaults of nineteenth-century rationalism, this new faith could not be exclusively Christian or transcendental in character, but expressed itself in terms of a variety of pseudo-religious forms, of which the most important was nationalism. Rudyard Kipling was the early twentieth-century equivalent of Cardinal Newman and Wesley. The mistake of all propagandists has been to suppose that the psychological movement which they observe in the society around them is destined to go on continuously in the same direction. Thus we see that in a time of scepticism, sceptical propagandists announce with triumph that superstition is dead and reason triumphant. In a time of religious reaction, Christian and nationalistic propagandists announced with equal satisfaction and certainty that scepticism has for ever been destroyed. Both, it is hardly necessary to say, are wrong. The course of history is undulatory, because (among other reasons) self-conscious men and women easily grow tired of a mode of thought and feeling which has lasted for more than a certain time. Propaganda gives force and direction to the successive movements of popular feeling and desire; but it does not do much to create those movements. The propagandist is a man who canalizes an already existing stream. In a land where there is no water, he digs in vain.

In a democratic state, any propagandist will have rivals competing with him for the support of the public. In totalitarian states there is no liberty of expression for writers and no liberty of choice for their readers. There is only one propagandist—the State.

That all-powerful rulers who make a regular use of terrorism should also be the most active propagandists known to history seems at first sight paradoxical. But you can do anything with bayonets except sit on them. Even a despot cannot govern for any length of time without the consent of his subjects. Dictatorial propaganda aims first of all at the legitimizing in popular estimation of the dictator's government. Old-established governments do not need to produce certificate of legitimacy. Long habit makes it seem 'natural' to people that they should be ruled by an absolute or constitutional monarch, by a republican president, by a prince bishop, by an oligarchy of senatorial families—whichever the case may be. New rulers have to prove that they have not usurped their title, but possess some higher right to govern than the mere fact of having grabbed power. Usurpation, like any other crime, has to justify itself in terms of the prevailing code of values—in terms, that is to say, of the very system which brands it as a crime. For example, in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there were two acknowledged sources of political power: the Empire and the Church. For this reason the man who had succeeded, by fraud or violence, in seizing the government of a city, generally hastened to have themselves appointed Vicars of the Church or Hereditary Captains of the Empire. To be able to tyrannize effectively they needed the title and appearance of constitutional authority. Since the French Revolution the recognized sources of power have been the People and the Nation. When modern despots have to legitimize their usurpations they do so in terms of nationalism and of that humanitarian democracy they themselves have overthrown. They issue propaganda to prove that their régime is for the good of the people or else, if the economic facts make nonsense of such a claim, for the good of that mystical entity, different from and superior to the mere individuals composing it, the Nation. But the general acknowledgment that his government is legitimate is not enough for the totalitarian dictator; he demands from his subjects that they shall all think and feel alike, and he uses every device of propaganda in order to make them think and feel alike. Complete psychological homogeneity occurs among primitive peoples. But the conditions of such homogeneity are, first, that the population shall be small; secondly, that it shall live in an isolation due either to geography or to the exclusiveness of the local religion; and, thirdly, that its system of production shall be more or less completely unspecialized. European dictators may wish and try to make their peoples as homogeneous as a tribe of Melanesians, to impose upon them a conformity as complete as that which exists among the Australian aborigines. But circumstances must finally prove too strong for them. Fifty million professionally specialized men and women cannot live together without emphasizing one another's natural diversities. Nor, with the best will in the world, can the dictator isolate himself from all contact with the outside world. This is one of the reasons why, in the long run, he is bound to fail. Meanwhile, he is sure of at least a partial and temporary success. Dictatorial propaganda demands obedience and even considerable financial and other sacrifices; but by way of compensation it assures the individual that, as a member of a chosen nation, race, or class, he is superior to all other individuals in the world; it dissipates his sense of personal inferiority by investing him with the vicarious glory of the community; it gives him reasons for thinking well of himself, it provides him with enemies whom he may blame for his own shortcomings and upon whom he may vent his latent brutality and love of bullying. Commercial propaganda is acceptable because it encourages men and women to satisfy their sensuous cravings and offers them escapes from their physical pains and discomforts. Dictatorial propaganda, which is always nationalistic or revolutionary propaganda, is acceptable because it encourages men and women to give free rein to their pride, vanity, and other egotistical tendencies, and because it provides them with psychological devices for overcoming their sense of personal inferiority. Dictatorial propaganda promotes the ugly reality of prejudice and passion to the rank of an ideal. Dictators are the popes of nationalism; and the creed of nationalism is that what ought to be is merely what is, only a good deal more so. All individuals seek justifications for such passions as envy, hatred, avarice, and cruelty; by means of nationalistic and revolutionary propaganda, dictators provide them with such justifications. It follows, therefore, that this propaganda of the dictators is certain to enjoy a certain temporary popularity. In the long run, as I have said, the impossibility of reducing a huge, educated population to the spiritual homogeneity of a savage tribe will tell against it. Furthermore, human beings have a strong tendency towards rationality and decency. (If they had not, they would not desire to legitimize their prejudices and their passions.) A doctrine that identifies what ought to be with the lowest elements of actual reality cannot remain acceptable for long. Finally, policies based upon a tribal morality simply won't work in the modern world. The danger is that, in process of proving that they don't work, the dictators may destroy that work.

Dictatorial propaganda may be classified under two heads: negative and positive. Positive propaganda consists of all that is written, negative propaganda, of all that is not written. In all dictatorial propaganda, silence is at least as important as speech, *suppressio veri* as *suggestio falsi*. Indeed, the negative propaganda of silence is probably more effective as an instrument of persuasion and mental regimentation than speech. Silence creates the conditions in which such words as are spoken or written take most effect.

An excess of positive propaganda evokes boredom and exasperation in the minds of those to whom it is addressed. Advertizing experts are well aware that, after a certain point, an increase in the pressure of salesmanship produces rapidly diminishing and finally negative returns. What is true of commercial propaganda seems to be equally true, in this respect, of political propaganda. Thus, most observers agree that at the Danzig elections, the Nazi propagandists harmed their cause by 'protesting too much.' Danzig, however, was a free city; the opposition was allowed to speak and the ground had not been prepared for positive propaganda by a preliminary course of silence and suppression. What are the effects of excessive positive propaganda within the totalitarian state? Reliable evidence is not available. Significant, however, in this context is the decline, since the advent of Nazism, in the circulation of German newspapers. Protesting too much and all in the same way, the propagandists succeeded only in disgusting their readers. *Suppressio veri* has one enormous advantage over *suggestio falsi*: in order to say nothing, you do not have to be a great stylist. People may get bored with positive propaganda; but where negative propaganda is so effective that there is no alternative to the spoken and written suggestions that come to them, all but the most independent end by accepting those suggestions.

The propagandists of the future will probably be chemists and physiologists as well as writers. A cachet containing three-quarters of a gramme of chloral and three-quarters of a milligram of scopolamine will produce in the person who swallows it a state of complete psychological malleability, akin to the state of a subject under deep hypnosis. Any suggestion made to the patient while in this artificially induced trance penetrates to the very depths of the subconscious mind and may produce a permanent modification in the habitual modes of thought and feeling. In France, where the technique has been in experimental use for several years, it has been found that two or three courses of suggestion under chloral and scopolamine can change the habits even of the victims of alcohol and irrepressible sexual addictions. A peculiarity of the drug is that the amnesia which follows it is retrospective; the patient has no memories of a period which begins several hours *before* the drug's administrations. Catch a man unawares and give him a cachet; he will return to consciousness firmly believing all the suggestions you have made during his stupor and wholly unaware of the way this astonishing conversion has been effected. A system of propaganda, combining pharmacology with literature, should be completely and infallibly effective. The thought is extremely disquieting.

So far, I have dealt with influence exercised by writers who wish to persuade their readers to adopt some particular kind of social or political attitude. We must now consider the ways in which writers influence readers as private individuals. The influence of writers in the sphere of personal thought, feeling and behaviour is probably even more important than their influence in the sphere of politics. But the task of defining that influence or of exactly assessing its amount is one of extraordinary difficulty. 'Art,' it has been said, 'is the forgiveness of sins.' In the best art we perceive persons, things, and situations more clearly than in life and as though they were in some way more real than realities themselves. But this clearer perception is at the same time less personal and egotistic. Writers who permit their readers to see in this intense but impersonal way exercise an influence which, though not easily definable, is certainly profound and salutary.

Works of imaginative literature have another and more easily recognizable effect; by a kind of suggestion they modify the characters of those who read them. The French philosopher, Jules de Gaultier, has said that one of the essential faculties of the human being is 'the power granted to man to conceive himself as other than he is.' He calls this power 'bovarism' after the heroine of Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary*. To some extent all men and women live under false names, are disguised as someone else, assume, whether consciously or unconsciously, a borrowed character. This *persona*, as Jung calls it, is formed to a great extent by a process of imitation. Sometimes the imitation is of living human beings, sometimes of fictional or historic characters; sometimes of virtuous and socially desirable personages, sometimes of criminals and adventurers. It may be, in the significant phrase of Thomas à Kempis, the Imitation of Christ; or it may be the imitation of the heroines of Mr. Michael Arlen's novels; the imitation of Julius Caesar or of the Buddha; of Mussolini or Werther; of Stavrogin or Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux or the gunmen of penny dreadfuls. People have bovarized themselves into the likeness of every kind of real or imaginary being. Sometimes the imitator chooses a model fairly like himself; but it also happens that he chooses one who is profoundly dissimilar. What de Gaultier calls the bovaric angle between reality and assumed *persona* may be wide or narrow. In extreme cases the bovaric angle can be equal to two right angles. In other words the real and assumed characters may have exactly opposite tendencies. Most of us, I imagine, go through life with a bovaric angle of between forty-five and ninety degrees.

Teachers have always tried to exploit the bovaric tendencies of their pupils, and the historical and literary model for imitation has from time immemorial played an important part in all moral education. Like other propagandists, however, educators are still unable to foresee how their pupils will respond to moral propaganda. Sometimes the response is positive, sometimes negative. We do not yet know enough to say, in any given circumstances, which it will be. The influence of books is certainly very great; but nobody, least of all their writers, can say in advance who will be influenced, or in what way or for how long. The extreme form of bovarism is paranoia. Here the individual plays a part so wholeheartedly that he comes to believe that he actually *is* the character he is impersonating. The influence of books on paranoiacs must be very considerable. People suffering from the paranoia of persecution often imagine that they are the victims of a diabolical secret society, which is identified with some real organization, such as that of the Freemasons or the Jesuits, about which the patient has read in history books or perhaps in works of fiction. In cases of the paranoia of ambition, books certainly serve to canalize the patient's madness. Megalomaniacs believe themselves to be divine or royal personages, or descendants of great historical figures, of whom they can have heard only in books. There is material here for an interesting medico-literary study.

Incidentally it may be remarked that many authors are themselves mildly paranoid in character. Books become popular because they vicariously satisfy a common wish. In many cases, also, they are written with the aim of satisfying the author's secret wishes, of realizing, if only in words, his bovaristic dreams. Consult a library catalogue and you will find that more books have been written on the career of Napoleon than on any other single subject. This fact casts a strange and rather terrifying light on the mentality of modern European writers and readers. How are we going to get rid of war, so long as people find their keenest bovaristic satisfaction in the story of the world's most spectacular militarist?

The course of psychological history is undulatory; therefore it happens that the literary models most commonly imitated at one period lose their popularity with succeeding generations. Thus, in the early eighteenth century, what Englishman or Frenchman would have desired to imitate those monsters of honour, who figured in the romances and plays of the later sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries? And who at the same period would have dreamed of assuming the sentimental roles so popular after about 1760? In a majority of cases readers choose to play the parts that come easiest to them. Thus it is obviously extremely difficult to act the part of a saint. For this reason the New Testament, though more widely read in Europe and over a longer period than any other book, has produced relatively few successful imitators of its central character. People have always preferred to play parts that would allow them to satisfy their appetites or their will to power. As in the time of Paolo and Francesca, the favourite heroes are still personages like Lancelot—great warriors and great lovers.

Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
  esser baciato da cotanto amante,
  questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
la bocca mi baciò tutto tremante.
  Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse;
  quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.

Dante provides us with a perfect example of erotic bovarism actively at work.

Certain fictional personages continue to make their appeal even over long periods and through considerable fluctuations in the habits of thought and feeling. Stendhal's Julien Sorel, for example, is still alive in France; and I was interested to learn from a Communist friend that this exemplar of ruthless individualism had recently achieved a great popularity in Russia. The vitality of Hamlet after more than three hundred years remains so great that the Nazis have found it necessary to discountenance revivals of the tragedy for fear that it should cause young Germans to forget the 'heroic' role which they are now supposed to play.

It sometimes happens that writers who are without influence on the habits of thought and feeling of their contemporaries begin to exercise such an influence after their death, when circumstances have so changed as to make their doctrine more acceptable. Thus, William Blake's peculiar sexual mysticism did not come into its own until the twentieth century. Blake died in 1827; but in a certain sense he was a contemporary of D. H. Lawrence. Along with Lawrence, he exercised a considerable influence over many people in post-War England and elsewhere. Whether the nature of this influence was what either Blake or Lawrence would have liked it to be is extremely doubtful. In a majority of cases, we may suspect, the mystical doctrines of Blake and Lawrence were used by their readers merely as a justification for a desire to indulge in the maximum amount of sexual promiscuity with a minimum amount of responsibility. That Lawrence passionately disapproved of such a use being made of his writings, I know; and it is highly probable that Blake would have shared his feelings. It is one of the ironies of the writer's fate that he can never be quite sure what sort of influence he will have upon his readers. Lawrence's books, as we have seen, were used as justifications for sexual promiscuity. For this reason they were outlawed by the Nazis when they first came into power, as mere *Schmutzliteratur*. Now, it appears, the Nazis have changed their minds about Lawrence; and his writings are accepted as justifications for violence, anti-rationalism, idolatory, and the worship of blood. That Lawrence meant to make his readers turn from intellectualism and conscious emotionalism towards the Dark Gods of instinct and physiology, is unquestionable. But it is safe to say that he did not mean to turn them into Nazis. Men are influenced by books to assume a character that is not entirely their own; but the character they assume may be quite different from the character idealized by the writer.

Even propagandists may achieve results quite unlike those they meant to achieve by their writings. For example, by persistently attacking an institution authors hope to persuade either its supporters or its victims to reform it. But in practice they may just as easily produce a precisely opposite effect. For invectives often act as a kind of vaccination against the danger of reform. Mr. Shaw's writings are revolutionary in intention, and yet he has become a favourite among the more intelligent members of the bourgeoisie; they read his satires and denunciations, laugh at themselves a little, decide that it 's all really too bad; then, feeling that they have paid the tribute which capitalism owes to social justice, close the book and go on behaving as they have always behaved. The works of revolutionary writers may serve as prophylactics against revolution. Instead of producing the active will to change, they produce cynicism, which is the acceptance of things as they are, combined with the derisive knowledge that they couldn't be worse—a knowledge that is felt by the person who possesses it to excuse him from making any personal effort to change the intolerable situation. Cynicism can effect not only those who profit by the existence of an undesirable state of things, but also those who are its victims. During the centuries which preceded the Reformation, cynical acceptance of the evils of ecclesiastical corruption was common among those who paid the piper as well as among those who called the tune, among the intelligent laity as well as among the princes of the Church. The fact of corruption was accepted as inevitable, like bad weather—a kind of bad weather that was at the same time a joke. Boccaccio, Chaucer, Poggio, and their lesser contemporaries denounced, but at the same time they laughed. Poggio's employers at the Vatican (he was a papal secretary) laughed with them. At a later date Erasmus's ecclesiastical and princely friends laughed no less heartily over his satirical comments on kings and clerics.

So did all the rest of the reading public. For Erasmus was, for his period, a prodigious best-seller. The Paris edition of his *Colloquies* sold twenty-four thousand copies in a few weeks—an incredibly large figure, when one reflects that the book was written in Latin. Of his *Praise of Folly* a hundred editions were printed between 1512 and 1676—most of them during the earlier part of that period.

After Luther had taken his revolutionary action, and when it had become clear that the movement for reform was a serious menace to the existing order of things, the official attitude towards Erasmus's writings began to change. In 1528 the *Colloquies* were suppressed, as being dangerously subversive. From fosterers of an amused acceptance and prophylactics against revolution, his denunciatory and satirical writings had been transformed, by the new circumstances, into dangerous revolutionary propaganda. Erasmus's failure to achieve what he meant to achieve was doubly complete. He meant to persuade the existing hierarchy to reform itself; he only succeeded in making it cynically laugh at itself. Then came Luther; and the writings which their author had penned as propaganda for rational reform within the Church were transformed automatically into propaganda for a revolution, of which he disapproved. And when the Church did reform itself, it was not at all in the Erasmian way. But luckily for Erasmus, he was not there to witness that reformation. Three years before the Society of Jesus came into the world the old humanist had passed out of it—none too early.

Let us return to our imaginative literature. Readers, as we have seen, often borrow characters from books in order to use them, bovaristically, in real life. But they also reverse this process and, projecting themselves out of reality into literature, live a compensatory life of fantasy between the lines of print. One of the main functions of all popular fiction, drama and now the cinema has been to provide people with the means of assuaging, vicariously and in fancy, their unsatisfied longings, with the psychological equivalents of stimulants and narcotics. The power of such literature to impose upon those whom we may call its addicts a kind of drugged acceptance of even the most sordid realities is probably very considerable. In real life one Englishman out of every sixty thousand is a peer, one out of every three hundred thousand has an income of a hundred thousand pounds a year. A census of fictional characters has never, so far as I know, been made; but I should guess that one out of a hundred, perhaps even one out of fifty, was either a lord, or a millionaire, or both at once. The presence of so many aristocrats and plutocrats in our literature has two causes. The first is that the rich and powerful enjoy more liberty than the poor and so are in a position to make their own tragedies, not merely to have disaster forced upon them from outside. There can be no drama without personal choice; and, proverbially, beggars cannot be choosers. Only people with incomes can afford to do much choosing in this world. 'Their rich and noble souls' (to quote one of Butler's Erewhonian authors) 'can defy all material impediment; whereas the souls of the poor are clogged and hampered by matter, which sticks fast about them as treacle to the wings of a fly. . . . This is the secret of the homage which we see rich men receive from those who are poorer than themselves.' Of the homage, too, that they receive from authors. The rich, the powerful, and the talented are freer than ordinary folk and are therefore the predestined subjects of imaginative literature. The other reason why literature is so lavish with wealth and titles is to be sought in the very fact that the real world is so niggardly of these things. Authors themselves and their readers desire imaginary compensations for their poverty and social insignificance. In the lordly and gilded world of literature they get it. Nor are poverty and powerlessness their only troubles; it is more than likely that they are also plain, have an insufficient or unromantic sex life; are married and wish they weren't, or unmarried and wish they were; are too old or too young; in a word, are themselves and not somebody else. Hence those Don Juans, those melting beauties, those innocent young kittens, those beautifully brutal boys, those luscious adventuresses. Hence Hollywood, hence the beauty chorus. When I was last at Margate a gigantic new movie palace had just been opened. Its name implied a whole social programme, a complete theory of art; it was called 'Dreamland.' At the present time, the cinema acts far more effectively as the opium of the people than does religion.

Hitherto I have described the more obvious effects produced by imaginative literature upon its readers. But it works also less conspicuously and in subtler ways:

> Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind? . . .
> He much, the old man, who, clearest-soul'd of men,
> Saw The Wide Prospect and the Asian Fen,
> And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though blind. . . .

And, in *The Waste Land*, Mr. Eliot uses the same metaphor:

> O swallow swallow
> Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie
> These fragments I have shored against my ruins
> Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe
> Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata.
> Shantih shantih shantih.

Words have power to support, to buttress, to hold together. And are at the same time moulds, into which we pour our own thought—and it takes their nobler and more splendid form—at the same time channels and conduits into which we divert the stream of our being—and it flows significantly towards a comprehensible end. They prop, they give form and direction to our experience. And at the same time they themselves provide experience of a new kind, intense, pure, unalloyed with irrelevance. Words expressing desire may be more moving than the presence of the desired person. The hatred we feel at the sight of our enemies is often less intense than the hatred we feel when we read a curse or an invective. In words men find a new universe of thought and feeling, clearer and more comprehensible than the universe of daily experience. The verbal universe is at once a mould for reality and a substitute for it, a superior reality. And what props the mind, what shores up its impending ruin, is contact with this superior reality of ordered beauty and significance.

In the past the minds of cultured Europeans were shaped and shored up by the Bible and the Greek and Latin classics. Men's philosophy of life tended to crystallize itself in phrases from the Gospels or the Odes of Horace, from the Iliad or the Psalms. Job and Sappho, Juvenal and the Preacher gave style to their despairs, their loves, their indignations, their cynicisms. Experience taught them the wisdom that flowed along verbal channels prepared by Aeschylus and Solomon; and the existence of these verbal channels was itself an invitation to learn wisdom from experience. To-day most of us resemble Shakespeare in at least one important respect: we know little Latin and less Greek. Even the Bible is rapidly becoming, if not a closed, at any rate a very rarely opened book. The phrases of the Authorized Version no longer prop and mould and canalize our minds. St. Paul and the Psalmist have gone the way of Virgil and Horace. What authors have taken their place? Whose words support contemporary men and women? The answer is that there exists no single set of authoritative books. The common ground of all the Western cultures has slipped away from under our feet.

Locally authoritive literatures are filling the vacuum created by the virtual disappearance from the modern consciousness of those internationally authoritative literatures which dominated men's minds in the past. *Mein Kampf* is a gospel and has had a sale comparable to that of the Bible—two million copies in ten years. For Russians, Marx and Lenin have become what Aristotle was for educated Europeans in the thirteenth century. (Lenin's works, in twenty-seven volumes, have already sold four million sets.) In Italy *Mussolini ha sempre ragione*; no higher claim was made by the orthodox for Moses or the Evangelists.

The peoples of the West no longer share a literature and a system of ancient wisdom. All that they now have in common is science and information. Now, science is knowledge, not wisdom; deals with quantities, not with the qualities of which we are immediately aware. In so far as we are enjoying and suffering beings, its words seem to us mostly irrelevant and beside the point. Moreover, these words are arranged without art; therefore possess no magical power and are incapable of propping or moulding the mind of the reader.

The same is true of that other bond of union between the peoples, shared information. The disseminators of information often try to write with the compulsive magic of art; but how rarely they succeed! It is not with fragments of the daily paper that we shore up our ruins.

The literature of information has, as its subject-matter, events which people feel to be humanly relevant. Unfortunately, journalism treats these profoundly interesting themes in what is, for all its flashing brilliance, a profoundly uninteresting, superficial way. Moreover, its business is to record history from day to day; it can never afford to linger over any particular episode. As little can the reader afford to linger. Even if the daily paper were well written, its very dailiness would preclude the possibility of his remembering any part of its contents. Materially, a thing of printer's ink and wood pulp, a newspaper does not outlast the day of its publication; by sunset it is in the dust-bin or the cess-pool. In the reader's memory its contents survive hardly so long. Nobody who reads—as well as all the rest—two or three papers a day can possibly be expected to remember what is in them. Yesterday's news is chased out of mind by to-day's. We remember what we read several times and with intense concentration. It was thus, because they were authoritative and had a mysterious prestige, that the Bible and the Greek and Latin classics were read. It is not thus that we read the *Daily Mail* or the *Petit Parisien.*

In modern scientific method we have a technique for invention; technological progress proceeds at an accelerating speed. But social change is inevitably associated with technological progress. To quicken the rate of the second is to quicken the rate of the first. The subject-matter of the literature of information has been enormously increased and has become more disquietingly significant than ever before. At the same time improvements in the technique for supplying information have created a demand for information. Our tendency is to attach an ever-increasing importance to news and to that quality of last-minute contemporaneity which invests even certain works of art, even certain scientific hypotheses and philosophical speculations, with the glamour of a political assassination of a Derby result. Accustomed as we are to devouring information, we make a habit of reading a great deal very rapidly. There must be many people who, once having escaped from school or the university, never read anything with concentration or more than once. They have no verbal props to shore against their ruins. Nor, indeed, do they need any props. A mind that is sufficiently pulverized and sufficiently agitated supports itself by the very violence of its motion. It ceases to be a ruin and becomes a whirling sandstorm.

In a certain sense our passion for information defeats its own object, which is increased knowledge of the world and other human beings. We are provided with a vastly greater supply of facts than our ancestors ever had an opportunity of considering. And yet our knowledge of other peoples is probably less thorough and intimate than theirs. In 1500 an educated Frenchman or German knew very little about current political events in England and nothing at all of the activities, so lavishly recorded in our literature of information, of English criminals, aristocrats, sportsmen, actresses. Nevertheless, he probably knew more about the intimate intellectual and emotional processes of Englishmen than his better-informed descendants know to-day. This knowledge was derived from introspection. Knowing himself he knew them. Minds moulded by the same religious and secular literatures were in a position to understand one another in a way which is inconceivable to men who have in common only science and information. By discrediting the Bible and providing a more obviously useful substitute for the study of the dead languages, triumphant science has completed the work of spiritual disunion which was begun when it undermined belief in transcendental religion and so prepared the way for the positivistic superstitions of nationalism and dictator-worship. It remains to be seen whether it will discover a way to put this shattered Humpty-Dumpty together again.

*From* THE OLIVE TREE

# WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

## THE CASE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE PEACE

FEELING, willing, thinking—these are the three modes of ordinary human activity. To be complete, life must be lived simultaneously on all three planes. To concentrate on only one mode at the expense of the rest, or on two at the expense of the third, is to court immediate or postponed disaster. In any important vital situation it is never enough to feel, never enough to will, never enough merely to think. We must do all at once.

Many naturally sensitive and gentle people have an intense feeling that there should be no more war. In some of these, feeling is accompanied by a determination that there shall be no more war, a will-to-peace that is ready to translate itself into action. But feeling without will or thought is impotent and tends to degenerate into mere self-indulgence. Feeling accompanied by will may result in action; but if there is no guiding thought, it is likely that the action will be ineffective because blind and misdirected. In this essay an attempt is made to provide all those who *feel* that war is an abomination, all who *will* that it shall cease, with an intellectual justification for their attitude; to show that their feeling and willing are essentially reasonable, that what is called the utopian dream of pacifism is in fact a practical policy—indeed, the only practical, the only realistic policy that there is.

Pacifists are people who have broken with an old-established convention of thought and, like all innovators, find themselves constantly subjected, off the platform as well as on it, to a process of more or less intelligent heckling. This being so, it has seemed best to state the pacifist case in terms of a series of answers to common antipacifist objections. It is proposed to deal with these objections in order, beginning with the most general, based on considerations of biology, and proceeding to the most specific, based on a consideration of contemporary politics.

## I

The first objection raised by our imaginary heckler is that 'war is a law of nature.' Therefore, it is argued, we cannot get rid of it. What are the facts? They are these: conflict is certainly common in the animal kingdom. But, with very rare exceptions, conflict is between isolated individuals. 'War' in the sense of conflict between armies exists among certain species of social insects. But it is significant that these insects do not make war on members of their own species, only on those of other species. Man is probably unique in making war on his own species.

Tennyson wrote of 'Nature red in tooth and claw.' But an animal can be bloodthirsty without being war-like. The activities of such creatures as tigers, sharks, and weasels, are no more war-like than those of butchers and sportsmen. The carnivores kill members of other species either for food or else, like fox-hunters and pheasant-shooters, to amuse themselves. Conflicts between individual animals of the same species are common enough. But again they are no more war-like than duels or pothouse brawls among human beings. Like human beings, animals fight mainly for love, sometimes (as with the birds that defend their 'territory') for property, sometimes for social position. But they do not make war. War is quite definitely not a 'law of nature.'

## II

Generals who inspect the O.T.C.'s of public schools are fond of telling their youthful audiences that 'man is a fighting animal.' Now, in the sense that, like stags, men quarrel for love, like whitethroats, for property, and, like barndoor fowls, for position in society, this statement may be regarded as true. Like even the mildest animals—and it is probable that our pre-human ancestors were gentle creatures something like the tarsiers of to-day—men have always done a good deal of 'scrapping.' In some places and at some epochs of history this 'scrapping' was a violent and savage affair; at others, relatively harmless: it has been entirely a matter of convention. Thus, in Europe, three hundred years ago, 'the best people' were expected to fight a duel on the slightest provocation; now they are not expected to do so. Within the lifetime of men still with us, games of rugby football ended, and were meant to end, in broken legs. On the modern football field broken legs are no longer in fashion. The rules for casual individual 'scrapping' and for those organized group-contests which we call sport, have been changed, on the whole for the better. The rules of war, on the contrary, have changed in every way for the worse. In the eighteenth century Marlborough gave a day's notice before beginning the bombardment of a town. To-day even a formal declaration of war is coming to be regarded as unnecessary. (Italy, for example, dispensed with it completely when attacking Abyssinia.) 'A declaration of war,' writes General Ludendorff, 'is a waste of time and also it sometimes unfortunately brands the nation who makes it.' Therefore, if we want to win and at the same time to avoid being stigmatized as aggressors, we should attack without warning.

To sum up, man is a fighting animal in the sense that he is a 'scrapping animal.' It is for man and man alone to decide whether he shall do his 'scrapping' murderously or according to rules which limit the amount of violence used or even, as in the case of non-violent resistance, abolish it altogether. Mass murder is no more a necessity than individual murder. In 1600 duelling must have seemed to many intelligent people a law of nature. But the fact remains that we have abolished duelling. There is no reason why we should not abolish war.

## III

At this point the objector appeals to Darwin. 'The struggle for existence,' he insists, 'goes on in the human as well as in the sub-human world. War is the method by which nature selects the fittest human beings.'

But whom or what does war select for survival? The answer is that, so far as individuals are concerned, it selects women, children, and such men as are too old or infirm to bear arms. The young and the strong, who do the fighting, are eliminated; and the larger the army and the more efficient the weapons, the greater the number of young, strong men who will be killed. War selects dysgenically.

The objector now falls back on a second line of defence. War may be a clumsy way of selecting individuals; but its real value lies in its power to select the best stocks, governments, and cultures. But if we look at the records of history we see that war has done its selection in a very erratic way. Sometimes, it is true, victory in war does unquestionably lead to replacement of the defeated by the victorious stock. But this can happen only when the victors exterminate their enemies or else drive them out of the territories previously occupied by them. This was the case, for example, in North America—a very thinly inhabited country. More often, however, the conquerors do not exterminate the conquered, but settle down among them as a ruling minority. Miscegenation takes place and the victors soon lose whatever racial purity they may have possessed and become ethnically assimilated to the vanquished. A stock may lose the military, but win the biological battle.

What is true of race is true of cultures and governments. Sometimes conquerors impose their cultures and governmental methods on the vanquished. Sometimes they fail to do so. Of the cultures by which the modern world has been most profoundly influenced, two—the Hebrew and the Greek—were the cultures of peoples who suffered final and complete military defeat at the hands of their enemies. War, we may agree, selects races, cultures, and governments. But with a fine impartiality it selects those of the vanquished at least as often as it selects those of the victors.

## IV

So much for the third objection; now for the fourth. 'We may dislike war,' says the heckler, 'but war has always been used as an instrument of policy and we must presume that it always will be so used. Consider the lessons of history and be resigned to the inevitable evil.'

Now, until recent years, the lessons of history lent a certain support to the militarists. Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Babylonians, Sumerians—all used war as an instrument of policy. The written records and archaeological documents seemed to show that war had been invariably correlated with civilization. Primitive peoples, like the Eskimos, might be ignorant of war and find the very idea of it inconceivable. But the civilized had always used it—and presumably would always continue to use it. Recent archaeological research has shown that this correlation between war and civilization has not been invariable. The civilization of the Indus Valley was as rich and elaborate as those of Sumer and Egypt. But it was a civilization that knew nothing of war. No weapons have been found in its buried cities, nor any trace of fortification. This fact is of the highest significance. It proves that it is possible for men to enjoy the advantages of a complex urban civilization without having to pay for them by periodical mass-murders. What men have done, they can do again. History teaches us that war is not inevitable. Once again, it is for us to choose whether we use war or some other method of settling the ordinary and unavoidable conflicts between groups of men. Where there 's a will—along with will, feeling and intelligence—there 's a way. The nature of that way will be discussed later.

## V

The fifth objection comes from those who insist that the only sanction of social order is violence. 'If there is to be peace or justice, it must be imposed by force. In the case of the international community of sovereign states, this peace-securing, justice-creating force is war. Therefore there must be war.'

(i) This objection raises three points which must be dealt with separately. First, is it true that social order rests on force? When we come to look at the facts, we find that, though force plays a part in preserving order within a community, that part is extremely small. Moreover, the part played by force becomes proportionately smaller the longer peaceful methods have been used. The resolute refusal of the English to arm their police is one of the reasons why England is a law-abiding country, in which it is so seldom necessary to use force But even in the least law-abiding of countries the real sanctions for order and justice are public opinion and the desire felt by every individual to be thought well of by his fellows. Force cannot impose permanent order on a people which is hostile to the wielders of force. There can be no stable government that is not government by consent. Even dictators realize that ruthlessness is not enough. Hence that flood of propaganda designed to make their régime popular, not only at home but also beyond their own frontiers. Even in prisons where the governor has more absolute control over his subjects than any dictator, it has been found that a man who is unpopular with the prisoners cannot rule them. Societies exist and are orderly because, in the last resort, the forces in human nature making for co-operation are stronger than those divisive forces making for anti-social conduct. Incidentally, war itself presupposes this preponderance of co-operative over divisive tendencies. An army could not be raised or, once raised, held together, if it were not for the co-operative spirit in each of its members. Once more, the choice is ours: we may either arbitrarily limit the co-operative spirit within the boundaries of a clan or nation; or we may allow it to have free play over the whole world. To love one's neighbour as oneself may mean much or little, according to our interpretation of the word 'neighbour.' It is left to us to decide whether that interpretation shall be narrow or broad.

(ii) Now for the second point: Can the force employed by the police within a national community be assimilated to the forces used by armies in settling disputes between such communities? Certainly not. Except in times of revolutions, civil war or political anarchy, the amount of force employed within the national community is strictly limited by law and by public opinion. (In England policemen are unarmed, and their power to use force is thus physically reduced to a minimum.) Modern war, on the contrary, is the deliberate use of practically unlimited violence and fraud. A difference in degree, if sufficiently great, turns into a difference in kind. Moreover the aim of war is radically different from the aim of police action. War aims at destruction. Police action does not. From the social point of view the 'force' that is war is something quite different from the 'force' that is police action. The end of war is destruction, and it employs unrestricted violence as its means. The end of police action is restraint, and its methods are to a great extent non-violent.

(iii) The third point to be considered is this. Even the most ruthless militarists have generally proclaimed that the end they were pursuing was peace. Theologians and philosophers have often justified war on the same grounds: war is permissible because it is a method for securing peace and justice. But, in point of fact, have peace and justice ever been secured by war? Is it possible, in the nature of things, that they can be secured by war? In so far as we are scientists, technicians, or artists, we all admit that the means employed determine the ends achieved. For example, a village blacksmith may be earnestly and sincerely desirous of making a Rolls-Royce engine. But the means at his disposal fatally determine his ends and the thing which finally emerges from the smithy will be very different from the instrument of precision that he intended to make. What is so obviously true of technology and science is no less true of all human activities. The man who uses violence as a means for securing the love of his family will certainly achieve quite another end. The state which makes war on a neighbour will create, not peace, but the makings of a war of revenge. The means determine the ends; and however excellent intentions may be, bad or merely unsuitable means must inevitably produce results quite unlike the good ends originally proposed. The heckler who adjures us to consider the lessons of history is in fact adjuring us to realize that once war has been adopted as a regular instrument of policy, once the idea that violence is the proper way of getting things done has become established as a truism, there can be no secure and lasting peace, only a series of truces between wars. For war, however 'just' it may seem, cannot be waged without the commission of frightful injustices; frightful injustices cannot be committed without arousing the resentment and hatred of those on whom they are committed, or on their friends or successors; and resentment and hatred cannot be satisfied except by revenge. But how can military defeat be avenged except by a military victory? The successive wars to which the historian points are the strongest possible argument against war as a method of securing peace and justice. The means determine the ends, and the end achieved by war is not peace, but more war.

In the past, very fortunately, the means for making war were inadequate. To-day they are so effective that, for the first time in history, indiscriminate and even unintentional massacre has become not only possible but even inevitable. There was a time when civil populations were not slaughtered except by the deliberate order of the conqueror. From this time forward, however humane the commanders of the opposing armies, civil populations can hardly fail to be massacred. Planes, gas, thermite. make it all but inevitable. The means of destruction have become so efficient that destruction will be more complete and more indiscriminate than ever before. In clinging to war as an instrument of policy, we are running risks which our ancestors never ran.

## VI

The sixth objection to pacifism is based on moral grounds. 'War,' we are told, 'is a school of virtues; peace, a school of effeminacy, degeneracy and vice.'

In his *Philosophy of War* Steinmetz went much further than this and affirmed that war was not merely a school of virtues, but actually the source of all the virtues, even the most unwarlike. How did early men learn to co-operate with one another? By making war on their fellows. Where did love and mutual aid originate? On the battlefield, among brothers in arms. And so on. Steinmetz's views are so manifestly absurd that it is unnecessary to discuss them. But our theoretical heckler's more modest attempt to justify war on moral grounds deserves to be treated seriously. For that war is a school of virtues is in fact true. Courage, self-control, endurance, a spirit of comradeship, a readiness to make the sacrifice of life itself—these are the qualities without which men cannot become good soldiers, or at any rate good subordinate soldiers; for history shows that a man may become a brilliant commander and yet be almost a moral imbecile. The two greatest military geniuses of modern times, Marlborough and Napoleon, were despicable human beings. There was something almost diabolic in the character of Frederick the Great. At the end of the world war almost the only member of the German High Command who displayed the military virtues was Hindenburg. The others disguised themselves and hurried across the frontier into the safety of a neutral country. Such examples could be multiplied. 'Great soldiers' have often lacked all the good qualities which we associate with the military profession.

To return to the virtues of the subordinate soldier: these are intrinsically admirable. But do they justify war? This question cannot be answered unless we know, first, what is the price of these virtues in terms of individual vice and social ruin, and, second, whether war is the only school in which they can be learnt.

Now, it is obvious that the soldier's characteristic virtues are accompanied by equally characteristic vices. The efficient soldier must hate and be angry, must know how to be inhuman, must be troubled, where his enemies are concerned, with no scruples or sensibilities. Moreover, his way of life tends to encourage in him certain recklessness. He doesn't care for anything or any one except his fellows and the traditions of his corps. Recklessness is a soil from which some good and much evil may spring—acts of uncommon generosity, but also acts of uncommon brutality.

Nor is this all. Military discipline demands unquestioning obedience. The subordinate soldier is a man who has handed over his reason and his conscience into the keeping of another. But a man who has given up reason and conscience is a man who has given up the most typically human characteristics of human beings. The government of an army is a special and extreme case of that most soul-destroying of all forms of government, a tyranny or, as we now prefer to call it, a dictatorship.

War, then, exacts a gigantic price for the military virtues. Vice and crime are the conditions of their very existence. Can it be right to cultivate virtue by means of wickedness? Those who believe that there exists, apart from self-interest and social convention, a real and absolute goodness, will answer at once that it cannot be right. No man is justified in doing an evil thing that good, as he believes, may come of it.

This view of what ought to be is confirmed by our investigations into what is. For we find that the military virtues can and do exist in individuals devoted not to war, but to the furtherance of peace. The causes of religion and humanitarianism have had their noble soldiers—soldiers whose courage, endurance, and self-control were not set off by any personal vice, any crime against society. War is only one, and that the worst, of schools in which men can learn the military virtues.

## VII

'You have made a good case against war,' says the objector, 'but you have failed to show what is the practical alternative to war. Indeed, you can't do so, because there is no practical alternative. Pacifism doesn't work.'

The answer to this is a flat contradiction. Pacifism *does* work. True, there is no pacifist technique for arresting shells in mid-trajectory or even for persuading the airmen circling above a city to refrain from dropping their bombs. Pacifism is in the main preventive. If the principles of pacifism are consistently put into practice the big guns will never be let off and the airmen will never be ordered to drop their bombs. The best way of dealing with typhoid is not to cure it, but to prevent its breaking out. Pacifism is to war what clean water and clean milk are to typhoid; it makes the outbreak of war impossible. But though mainly preventive, pacifism is also, as we shall see, a technique of conflict—a way of fighting without the use of violence.

If you treat other people well, other people will generally treat you well. It is possible to go further and to say that, if you have the opportunity of going on treating them well, they will at last *invariably* reciprocate your treatment. Suspicious people may start by reacting badly; but in the long run, trust, affection, and disinterestedness will always be answered by trust, affection, and disinterestedness. This fact, the truth of which we have all had occasion to demonstrate in our relations with our fellows, is the sure foundation upon which the theory and technique of pacifism are based.

The theory and technique of militarism are based on a psychological assumption that is self-evidently absurd. The militarist sets out to secure other people's good will by making war on them—that is to say by treating them as badly as he possibly can. But it is a matter of everyday experience that if you treat other people badly they will answer (unless, of course, they happen to be saints or trained pacifists) either by treating you badly at once, or if the power to return evil for evil is lacking, by waiting in fear, anger, and hatred for an opportunity to treat you badly later on. Unless followed by an act of reparation, war will always be answered by war. Hate breeds hate, and violence, violence.

In our relations with other human beings we have all of us, at some time or another, made use of the pacifist technique. By treating people well, we have prevented them from treating us badly or have persuaded them to change their malevolence into kindness. More consciously and consistently, preventive pacifism is employed by doctors when they treat lunatics, by anthropologists when they approach suspicious and unfriendly savages, by naturalists in their dealings with wild animals. On a large scale the methods, not only of preventive, but also of what may be called combative pacifism were successfully practised by the early Christians in their conflict with the authorities of the Roman Empire; by William Penn and the first settlers of Pennsylvania towards the Redskins; by practically the whole Hungarian nation when, in the sixties of last century, the Emperor Francis Joseph was trying to subordinate that country to Austria in violation of the existing treaty of union; by Gandhi and his followers, first in South Africa and then in India. Furthermore, large numbers of industrial strikes have been conducted on strictly pacifist lines, often with remarkable success. There is enough historical evidence to show that the pacifist technique is unquestionably effective. Why, then, has it not been more widely used as an instrument of policy, a method for preventing the outbreak of disputes between individuals and groups or (once the conflict has begun) for conducting the struggle in a non-violent way? Once more it is a question, not of impossibilities, not of obstacles existing in the nature of things, but of our own free will. If pacifism has been used less frequently than war, the reason is simple. We have refused to take the trouble to anticipate impending evil, and so prevent its coming to pass; when the conflict has broken out, we have refused to control our passions of anger, hatred, and malice, and have allowed them full rein in acts of violence. It is in our power to make a different choice.

In the following paragraphs we shall try to describe two kinds of pacifism, combative and preventive. Combative pacifism may be defined as the strategy and tactics of non-violent resistance to violence. Non-violent resistance is a technique which relies on the fact that it is impossible to display the virtues of courage, patience, devotion, and disinterestedness without evoking sooner or later a response from even the most ardent and highly trained practitioners of the militaristic technique.

It takes two to make a quarrel. Most men find that they can be violent only towards people who show the appropriate reactions—fear, rage, or a mixture of the two. One can use violence on a man who angrily resists, and one can use it on a man who shows terror. But when someone turns up who reacts to violence without anger and without fear, it becomes very difficult to go on using the violence. The non-violent resister is a man who refuses to play the part assigned to him by the rules of the game; the result is that the other player finds it difficult and at last impossible to go on playing his part. In mass movements of non-violent resistance, detachments of volunteers present themselves without fear and without anger to the forces sent against them. As one falls, another takes his place, until at last even highly disciplined soldiers or policemen find it impossible to go on using the militaristic technique in which they have been trained.

Meanwhile the spectacle of suffering voluntarily accepted creates in the minds of all who witness the scene or who read of it, a feeling of sympathy for the non-violent and indignation against the violent. Nor is this all. In the end it evokes from the violent themselves a reluctant feeling of respect and admiration for their victims. A situation arises in which it becomes relatively easy for violent attackers and non-violent resisters to negotiate an honourable settlement, reasonably satisfactory to both parties. All those who use violence instinctively recognize the peculiar power of non-violent resistance and do their best to prevent it from being used by their opponents. Faced by determined but peaceful strikers, industrialists have frequently made use of *agents provocateurs*, to foment a spirit of violence. They *want* to have their windows broken; they *want* stones to be thrown at the police. Why? Because they know that, once the strikers take to violence, their fate is sealed. They can be coerced, and public opinion will be on the side of the coercers.

A display of non-violent resistance has the effect of emphasizing among all concerned the great truth of human solidarity. The fact that noble behaviour should have power to evoke a response even among the enemies of those who are so behaving, is a most reassuring reminder that all men are at one in a profound spiritual unity.

Non-violent resistance can be successfully undertaken only by trained troops. In a later paragraph the nature of this training required and the functions of these soldiers of peace will be discussed.

From this description of non-violence it must be fairly obvious that non-violent resistance cannot be used to any considerable extent in modern war, which is waged almost exclusively by means of long-range weapons inflicting indiscriminate destruction. Once war had broken out, pacifists are almost helpless. Therefore it must be prevented from breaking out. But it can only be prevented from breaking out if at least one government of an important sovereign state chooses to act pacifistically towards its neighbours. The practical task before pacifists in this country is to persuade the government to act pacifistically towards other governments. In later sections we shall discuss, first, the sort of policy that a government determined to prevent an outbreak of war should pursue (section X); second, the means by which individual pacifists should seek to induce their government to adopt such a policy (section XII).

## VIII

'The Church does not condemn war,' says an orthodox heckler. 'Why am I expected to be more pacifist than the bishops?'

The Church does not condemn war; but Jesus did condemn it. Moreover the Christians who lived during the first three centuries of our era not only believed that Jesus had condemned war, but themselves repeated the condemnation in more specific terms. Here it is possible to give only the briefest summary of the historical evidence. Those who wish to study this subject in detail should consult the articles on war in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* and in *The Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*. A fuller account is given by C. J. Cadoux, D.D., in his book *The Early Christian Attitude to War.*

Among the Early Fathers, Justin Martyr and Tatian in the second century, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, and Hippolytus in the third, Arnobius, Eusebius and Lactantius in the fourth, all regarded war as organized iniquity. Here are a few characteristic quotations from their writings on the subject.

The first two are from the *Divinæ Institutiones* of Lactantius. 'When God prohibits killing, He not only forbids us to commit brigandage, which is not allowed even by the public laws; but He warns us that not even those things which are regarded as legal among men are to be done. And so it will not be lawful for a just man to serve as a soldier . . . nor to accuse anyone of a capital offence, since it makes no difference whether thou killest with a sword or with a word, since killing itself is forbidden. And so in this commandment of God no exception at all ought to be made that it is always wrong to kill a man.'

'How can he be just who injures, hates, despoils, kills? And those who strive to be of advantage to their own country (in war) do all these things.'

Tertullian remarks that truth, gentleness, and justice cannot be obtained by means of war. 'Who shall produce these results with the sword and not rather those which are the contrary of gentleness and justice, namely deceit and harshness and injustice, which are of course the proper business of battles?' (An excellent statement of the almost invariably neglected truth that means determine ends and that good ends cannot be achieved by bad or even inappropriate means.)

Origen writes of his co-religionists that 'we no longer take "sword" against a "nation," nor do we learn "any more to make war," having become sons of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our leader, instead of following the ancestral customs in which we were strangers to the covenants.'

In the Canons of Hippolytus we read that a soldier who professes Christianity is to be excluded from the sacrament, until such time as he has done penance for the blood he has shed.

In the early part of the fourth century Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The cross was used as a military standard and the pious Constantine had the nails with which Jesus had been crucified converted into a helmet for himself and bits for his war-horse. The act was profoundly symbolical. In the words of Dean Milman, 'the meek and peaceful Jesus had become a God of battle.'

The new political situation soon found reflection in Christian theory. Already in the middle years of the fourth century, Athanasius, the father of orthodoxy, is saying that 'to destroy opponents in war is lawful and worthy of praise.' St. Ambrose thirty years later and St. Augustine at the beginning of the fifth century repeat and elaborate this argument. We find Augustine saying that 'many things have to be done in which we have to pay regard, not to our own kindly inclinations, but to the real interests of others, and their interests may require that they should be treated, much as they may dislike it, with a certain benignant asperity.' It is a justification in advance of the Inquisition and the wars of religion—indeed of war of every kind; for now that infallibility has been claimed by sovereign states, the rules of each nation know exactly what is best for all other nations and feel it their duty, merely in the highest interests of their neighbours, to use a 'certain benignant asperity' towards them.

Modern Christians have used a number of arguments to justify their complete disregard of the precepts of Jesus in regard to war. Of the two most commonly employed, the first is the argument which asserts that Jesus meant his followers to accept the 'spirit' of his teachings, without being bound by the 'letter.' In other words, that he meant them to ignore his words completely and go on behaving, in all the practical details of life, as though they had never been uttered, The Pauline distinction between 'letter' and 'spirit' has been made the justification for every kind of iniquity.

The second argument is that Jesus meant his ethical system to apply only to relations obtaining between persons, not to those obtaining between nations. This is to imply that Jesus sanctioned mass murder between any two groups which at any given moment of history happen to regard themselves as autonomous and sovereign. It is hardly necessary to say that there is nothing in the gospels to substantiate such an interpretation of Christ's teaching.

## IX

'The causes of war are economic and can be eliminated only by a change in the economic system.'

First of all, the causes of war are not exclusively economic. There have been wars of religion, wars of prestige, even wars for the sake of destruction. In the second place, even in those cases where the immediate causes of conflict between nations have been economic in character, the fact that nations exist and act as war-making units cannot be explained in economic terms. Wars, we are told, are made by capitalists and armament makers for their own private interests. But capitalists and armament makers need troops to do the fighting, an electorate to back their policy. They get their troops and their electorate because the violent divisive passions of nationalistic pride, vanity, and hatred are present in the masses of their countrymen. Hence the need for pacifist organizations pledged to the realization of human unity through non-violence.

Wars, then, are not exclusively economic in origin. Let us, however, admit for the sake of argument that the factors which make for war are mainly economic and that a suitable change in the existing economic system would eliminate those causes. We are still faced by the all-important question: How do you propose to change the existing system? By violence, say the revolutionaries. But if violence is used as the means, the end achieved will inevitably be different from the end proposed. In Russia, the end proposed was Communism. Ruthless and prolonged violence was used to achieve that end. With what result? That contemporary Russian society is *not* communistic; it is an elaborately hierarchical society, ruled by a small group of men who are ready to employ the extremes of physical and economical coercion against those who disagree with their views; a society in which, according to reliable observers, the exclusive and ultimately bellicose spirit nationalism is growing in intensity; a society in which the principle of authority is accepted without question, and violence is taken for granted. Within

Russian society the economic system has been changed to this extent, that individuals cannot own the means of production and are therefore unable, as owners, to coerce their fellow human beings. But though individuals cannot coerce as owners, they can coerce as representatives of the State. (Let us remember, incidentally, that 'the State' is merely a name for certain individuals using power either lawlessly or else according to certain rules.) The principle of coercion has survived the revolution and is in fact still ruthlessly applied. As the revolution was violent and coercive, it could not be otherwise. The violent means so conditioned the end proposed that it was impossible for that end to be what the revolutionaries had intended it to be—that is, Communism within the country and international co-operation without its borders. True, other countries have not done anything to make such co-operation easy; but the fact remains that Russia possesses the largest army in the world, and that pride in this army is inculcated in Russian citizens from their tenderest years. Countries which possess and are proud of large armies almost invariably end, as history shows, by making use of them against their neighbours. To sum up, the economic system has been changed in Russia; but it was changed with violence; therefore it has remained natural for Russians to regard the use of violence, both within the country and without, as normal and inevitable. International war and coercion at home will continue to exist for just so long as people regard these things as suitable, as even conceivable, instruments of policy. The pacifist does not object to the ends originally proposed by the revolutionaries; on the contrary, he regards such ends as being intrinsically desirable. What he rejects is the means by which the revolutionaries set out to realize these ends. And he rejects them for two reasons; first, because he believes that an evil act is always evil, whatever the reason given for its performance; and, second, because he sees that, as a matter of fact, bad means make the good ends unrealizable. If Communism is to be achieved it can only be by non-violent means.

The pacifist differs from the Marxian revolutionary on another important issue. While the Marxian puts the whole blame for the present state of the world on the existing economic system and on those who profit by that system, the pacifist is prepared to admit that he also may be to some extent responsible. The pacifist does not believe that the Kingdom of God can be imposed on mankind from without, by means of a change of organization. He believes that, if the Kingdom is to be realized, he himself must work for it, and work for it not only as a public figure, but also in his private life.

'It is not the munition makers but the masses, who by their votes elect and support governments and administrations committed to the pursuit of policies of economic nationalism, who are the real "merchants of death." Italian Fascists, German National Socialists and Japanese Imperialists, despite their common doctrine of violence, have done no more to make future wars inevitable than has the American Democracy by means of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff, the war debt policy and its performance at the London Economic Conference. It is, to be sure, unmistakable that a country as richly endowed materially as is the United States can, at least temporarily, achieve domestic prosperity by means of purely monopolistic economic policies. But it should be equally evident that a people which permits and encourages its government to pursue such politics, deliberately bolts and bars the door to world peace.' These words are taken from the concluding chapter of *The Price of Peace*, a book published in 1935 by two American economists, Frank H. Simonds and Brooks Emeny. They are writing of the American Democracy; but every word of what they say applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the British Democracy. In a later paragraph the authors specifically mention our country. The British and American people, they say, have resolved 'to combine the profits of exclusive nationalism with the benefits of internationalism. . . . They have invited all peoples to join them in a partnership to preserve peace, but have reserved to themselves the profits of such peace, while leaving to the others the privilege of paying the costs.' Not unnaturally the others are declining the invitation. The pacifist insists that if we want other people to make sacrifices we must begin by making sacrifices ourselves; that it is only by being generous (even at our own expense) and by telling the truth (even though that truth be to our own discredit) that we shall elicit generosity and truth from others.

## X

'General principles,' says the objector, 'are all very fine; but we live in a world of particular and specific realities. How do you expect your pacifism to work in the circumstances of the present moment? What about Italy and Abyssinia, for example? What about sanctions? What about Germany? What about Japan?'

The pacifist solution to these pressing contemporary problems can be outlined quite briefly. Let us begin by describing the historical antecedents which have led up to the present situation. Germany, Italy, and Japan are three countries whose position in the post-War world is fundamentally similar. All suffer from a sense of grievance—of grievance, moreover, which the existing circumstances of the world very largely justify. Germany suffered military defeat and prolonged humiliation at the hands of her conquerors. During the boom years, she was helped, for purely commercial motives, by Allied and American capitalists, who helped to earn large profits by financing German industry; then came the slump; as much foreign capital as could be withdrawn was withdrawn, tariff barriers were everywhere set up or, if they already existed, raised still higher. It became more and more difficult for German industrialists either to sell what they had manufactured or, owing to monetary difficulties and the absence of colonies, to procure raw materials. The Nazis have promised to extricate Germany from this intolerable situation by force of arms, if necessary.

Italy emerged from the War nominally a victor, but in fact little the better off for her espousal of the Allied cause. The clauses of the disgraceful Secret Treaties were not, because they could not be, fulfilled, and the Italians received no colonial mandates. Emigration of the Italians was progressively restricted until during the slump it fell almost to zero. For more than thirteen years the Fascists have been promising to make Italy great and prosperous. Since October 1935 they have been attempting to keep that promise at the expense of Abyssinia.

At the Versailles Peace Conference, the Japanese were collectively insulted by President Wilson, who insisted that a nation of yellow men could not be treated on the same terms as a nation of white men. During the succeeding years tarriff barriers have everywhere been raised against cheap Japanese goods, while America and the British Dominions have completely prohibited the immigration of Japanese citizens. Meanwhile, in Japan, population has rapidly increased. In Japan the army has done what the Nazis and the Fascists did in Germany and Italy; it has promised to rescue the country from its present plight by force of arms. What is more, it has begun to fulfil this promise—at the expense of China. What the Japanese have done in Manchuria, the Italians are at present trying to do in Abyssinia and the Germans are hoping to do in Middle Europe and possibly Russia.

Over against these three hungry and thwarted powers stand four satiated powers, possessing between them the greater part of the world's surface and most of the raw materials indispensable to modern industry. These four powers are the British Empire, the United States, France, and Russia. To these must be added Holland, Belgium, and Portugal—three small powers whose considerable colonial possessions are guaranteed (for as long as it suits them to do so) by England and France. The satisfied powers enjoy their present privileged position in regard to materials, land, and markets, partly as a result of historical accident, partly in virtue of a policy of conquest pursued above all during the nineteenth century. So long as these four powers remain possessed of what they now own and so long as they persist in their present monopolistic policies, the three great unsatisfied powers must of necessity remain unsatisfied. Objectively, this means that the standard of living among the unsatisfied must continue steadily to decline; subjectively, it means that they will cherish a feeling of intense resentment against the satisfied, together with a passionate conviction that they have been given less than justice.

The re-distribution of territory after the Napoleonic wars was ethnically unsound. Ruled by alien governments, large bodies of men and women—Italians, Greeks, Poles, and many others—felt that they were being treated unjustly; and this sense of injustice was so intense that people preferred the risks and horrors of war to a peace which they felt to be humiliating. The peace of Versailles was, ethnically speaking, a tolerably good peace. Economically, however, it was a thoroughly bad peace. The peoples of three great countries (as well as of numerous small countries) feel that they have been and are being treated unjustly. And so intense is the feeling, so painful is the process of gradual and steady impoverishment to which they are being subjected, that for great masses of these people war—even modern war—seems preferable to peace, as they know it to-day.

That the existence of unsatisfied powers represents a source of constant danger to world peace is clearly recognized. To guard against this danger the monopolistic powers spend ever-increasing sums on armaments. They hope by this threatening display of force to frighten the unsatisfied powers into renouncing their claims for justice. In the event of the unsatisfied powers refusing to renounce these claims and going to war, the monopolistic powers expect to be able to win.

Militarists are incurably romantic, constitutionally incapable of facing facts. To the realistic pacifist it is obvious that the present policy of the monopolistic states is hopelessly chimerical. For, first of all, the peoples of the unsatisfied countries are so desperate that threats will not deter them from resorting to a war which to them may seem actually preferable to peace, as they know it at present. And, secondly, once war is made, it is quite impossible to predict what will happen. The monopolistic powers may emerge victorious—that is if any one emerges at all. Or they may not. And even if they win, victory may be obtained at a cost too great for men to pay. Up till now militarism has been a policy, bad indeed, but, thanks to the inefficiency of armaments, not so destructive as many conquerors would doubtless have liked it to be. One war, it is true, inevitably led to another; but in the interval the warring countries and their cultures managed to survive. Where societies are highly complex and weapons extremely destructive, militarism ceases to be a policy of anything but mass suicide.

The pacifist's alternative to militarism is a policy that has the double merit of being not only morally right, but also strictly practical and business-like. Guided by the moral intuition that it can never in any circumstances be right to do evil and by the two empirically verified generalizations, first, that means determine ends and, second, that by behaving well to other people you can always, in the long run, induce other people to behave well to you, he lays it down that the only right and practical policy is a policy based on truth and generosity. How shall such a policy of truth and generosity be applied to the particular circumstance of the present time? The answer is clear. The great monopolistic powers should immediately summon a conference at which the unsatisfied powers, great and small, should be invited to state their grievance and claims. When this has been done it would be possible, given intelligence and good will, to work out a scheme of territorial, economic, and monetary readjustments for the benefit of all. That certain immediate sacrifices would have to be made by the monopolistic powers is inevitable. These sacrifices would be in part sacrifices of economic advantages, in part, perhaps mainly, of prestige—which is the polite and diplomatic word for pride and vanity.

It is unnecessary to go into details here. Suffice it to say that there would have to be agreement as to the supply of tropical raw materials; an agreement on monetary policy; an agreement with regard to industrial production and markets; an agreement on tariffs; an agreement on migration.

The calling of such a conference as has been described above constitutes the only practical solution of the difficult problem of sanctions against Italy. People of good will are painfully perplexed because it seems to them that sanctionist countries are on the horns of a dilemma. Either sanctions must be intensified, in which case it is probable that Italy will, in desperation, precipitate a European war; or else Abyssinia must be sacrificed, in which case a wanton act of aggression will have been rewarded at the expense of the victim. In fact, there is a third and better alternative, a more excellent way between the horns of the dilemma. A world conference can be called immediately for the permanent settling of the justifiable claims, not only of Italy, but of all the other dissatisfied powers. The immediate application of pacifist principles offers the hope of the solution of problems which, if they are left to complicate themselves, may become almost insoluble.

To reach any kind of international agreement is difficult, for the simple reason that nations are regarded by their representatives as wholly immoral beings, insanely proud, touchy, fierce, and rapacious. In spite, however, of this monstrous conception of sovereignty, agreements do in fact get made and, what is more remarkable, are often observed, at any rate for a time, quite honourably. What can be and has been done piece-meal and on a small scale can be done, if we so desire, on a large scale and consistently.

The greatest immediate sacrifices, as has been said before, will have to come from those who possess the most. These sacrifices, however, will be negligible in comparison with the sacrifices which will be demanded from us by another war. Negligible in comparison even with those which are at present being demanded by the mere preparation for another war.

What of the League of Nations? There is, unhappily, much truth in the Italian contention that the League in its present form is an instrument for preserving the *status quo*. The League is in fact controlled by the two great monopolistic nations of Western Europe, England and France. These nations are unwilling to sacrifice their present superiority and, though this superiority was won by the use of violence in the past, they prefer to seem righteously indignant (and in fact since successful nations always have short memories, *are* righteously indignant) at the use of violence by unsatisfied countries at the present time. To be of value, the League must continue permanently the work begun by our proposed conference and become an instrument for securing equality of opportunity for all nations through the international control of raw materials, markets, production, and currency.

## XI

'Talking about Leagues and Conferences in the present crisis,' objects the heckler, 'is like fiddling while Rome burns. Our civilization is in danger; our political system, one of the few democracies left in the world, is menaced. We must be prepared to fight for their preservation and, in order to fight, we must be well armed. Ours is a sacred trust, and we therefore have no right to take the risks of pacifism.'

That time presses is, alas, only too true. Pacifists must act quickly. The sooner they can persuade their government to summon a conference of the kind described above, the better its chances will be. During recent months official spokesmen have several times stated the government's intention of some day summoning a preventive conference of all the nations. Unhappily they have always gone on to make nonsense of this profession of good intentions by insisting that the moment for putting them into practice had not yet arrived. The government's peace policy may be briefly stated as follows: 'We agree that a preventive conference should be summoned; but we think that the international situation is not at present auspicious. Therefore we shall not summon the conference now. Meanwhile we propose to treble our air force, strengthen our navy and increase our military effectives.' But if, in existing circumstances, international feeling is too bad for it to be possible to call a conference, what will it be after we have increased our armaments? Incomparably worse; for the unsatisfied powers will see in our military preparations only another threat to themselves, an attempt to perpetuate by force of arms the present injustices. Many people who genuinely desire peace believe that large-scale rearmament will bring peace nearer.

The theory is that potential peace-breakers will be frightened by our display of force into good behaviour. Such belief is wholly at variance with the facts of history. Accumulation of armaments by one power has always led, first, to accumulation of armaments by other powers and then, when the financial strain became unbearable, to war. As usual, it is a matter of relating means to ends. Armaments, as history shows, are *not* appropriate means for achieving peace.

Let us consider the other objections made by our heckler. Pacifism certainly has its risks. But so has militarism; and the risks of militarism are far greater than those of pacifism. Militarism cannot fail to lead us into war, whereas pacifism has a very good chance of preventing war from breaking out.

The nations of the world live within a malevolently charmed circle of suspicion, hatred, and fear. By pursuing a policy of pacifism, and only by pursuing a policy of pacifism, we can break out of the circle. One generous gesture on the part of a great nation might be enough to set the whole world free. More than any other nation, Britain is in a position to make that gesture. 'To make it,' protest the militarists, 'is to court disaster.' But to go on preparing for war and thereby rendering war inevitable is also to court disaster—disaster more certain and more complete.

Which is better, to take a risk for a good cause, or to march to certain perdition for a bad one?

## XII

This time the questioner is not hostile. 'I am a convinced pacifist,' he begins. 'I have signed a pledge that I will take no part in another war. But war is still in the future, I want to do something now—something that will prevent the war from breaking out. What can I do?'

Let us try to answer this as briefly as possible. To sign a pledge refusing to take any part in another war is commendable. But it is not enough. Prevention is always better than cure; and where modern war is concerned it is in fact the only course open. For the next European war will begin without warning, will be waged at long range by scientific weapons capable of spreading indiscriminate destruction. Pacifists may have the best will in the world; but in these circumstances they will be able to do very little to cure the disease once it has broken out. Therefore, while there is yet time, they must do all in their power to prevent the disease from breaking out.

In a vague way practically every one is now a pacifist. But the number of those who are prepared to put themselves to inconvenience for their opinions is always small. Most pacifists will go to the trouble of voting for peace; for the rest, they will be what the pun upon their name implies—merely passive. Active or Constructive Pacifists are, and must be content to remain, a minority. How is this minority to make itself effective? By uniting, first of all. But there are unions and unions. The formation of yet another subscription-collecting, literature-distributing and possibly pledge-signing society is not enough. The Constructive Peace Movement must be all these things; but it must be something else as well. It must be a kind of religious order, membership of which involves the acceptance of a certain way of life, and entails devoted and unremitting personal service for the cause.

What is the best form for such an organization to take? History leaves us in no doubt. The Early Christians, the founders of the monastic and mendicant orders, the Quakers, the Wesleyans, the Communists (to mention but a few of those responsible for important social movements)—all used fundamentally the same type of organization: an affiliation of smaller groups. Here are a few tentative suggestions for the organization of the Constructive Peace Movement. The local unit is a small team of not less than five or more than ten members. These teams meet at least once a week for discussion, for mutual help and criticism, for mutual strengthening in the common faith, for the performance in common of spiritual exercises. In any district where a number of teams exist, particular tasks may be assigned to each. Some teams should undertake propaganda; others should form themselves into study circles to investigate particular aspects—whether personal, social, or international—of the general problem of peace. All should attempt to put the principles of Constructive Peace into regular practice. Thus, every group should be an unlimited liability company, in which each member assumes responsibility for all the rest. In some cases groups may feel inclined to assume special social responsibilities, as, for example, towards a particular destitute family or a certain category of people, such as released prisoners, patients in a local hospital and the like. At monthly intervals all the groups of the district should meet to pool information and experience. Larger meetings and demonstrations would be organized from time to time by a central office.

At the present time Constructive Pacifists have one immediate task to which they should devote a good part of their energies. This immediate task is to persuade the government of this country to apply the obvious principles of preventive pacificism to the present international situation. This it can do by calling at the earliest possible date a conference for the discussion of the economic and political causes of war and the elaboration of a world-wide scheme for eliminating those causes. Constructive Pacifists must try to get the eleven millions of well-meaning but passive pacifists who voted for the Peace Ballot to implement their rather vague aspirations by a signature in favour of this particular policy—the only policy that is in the least likely to give them the peace for which they expressed their desire last year. Time will show what other tasks must be undertaken; but for the moment this is certainly the most important.

So much for the organization and immediate policy. In these concluding paragraphs we shall offer a few haphazard remarks of a more general nature.

The philosophy which underlies Constructive Pacifism has been described by implication in an earlier paragraph. But it seems advisable to state it more explicitly here. The philosophy of Constructive Pacifism proceeds from a consideration of what is to a statement of what ought to be—from empirical fact to idea. The facts upon which the doctrine is based are these. First, all men are capable of love for their fellows. Second, the limitations imposed upon this love are of such a nature that it is always possible for the individual, if he so desires, to transcend them. Third, love and goodness are infectious. So are hatred and evil.

The Constructive Pacifist formulates his belief in some such words as these. The spirit is one and all men are potentially at one in the spirit. Any thought or act which denies the fundamental unity of mankind is wrong and, in a certain sense, false; any thought or act which affirms it is right and true. It is in the power of every individual to choose whether he shall deny or affirm the unity of mankind in an ultimate spiritual reality.

The political, social, and individual ideals of Constructive Peace follow logically from its doctrine. The pacifists' social and international policy have already been sufficiently described. It is necessary, however, to say a few words about his individual way of life. The whole philosophy of Constructive Peace is based on a consideration of the facts of personal relationship between man and man. Hence it is impossible that Constructive Pacifism should be merely a large-scale and, so to speak, abstract policy. It must also be a way of life. There are men who profess to be pacifists in international politics, but who are tyrants in their families, bullying employers, ruthless and unscrupulous competitors. Such men are not only hypocrites; they are also fools. Nobody but a fool can suppose that it is possible for a government to behave as a pacifist, when the individuals it represents conduct their private affairs in an essentially militaristic way. Constructive Peace must be first of all a personal ethic, a way of life for individuals; only on that condition will it come to be embodied, permanently and securely, in forms of social and international organization. There is another, immediately cogent reason why those who accept the doctrines and responsibilities of Constructive Peace should do their best to conform to the pacifist way of life. The finally convincing argument in favour of any doctrine is personal example. By their fruits ye shall know them; and unless the moral fruits of Constructive Peace are good, its doctrine will not be accepted. Soldiers are admired for their courage, their endurance, their self-sacrifice; the military virtues are the best propaganda for militarism. The Constructive Pacifist must exhibit all the finest military virtues together with others that the soldier cannot possess; if he does, his life will be the best propaganda.

It is easy to talk about a more excellent way of life, immensely difficult to live it. Five Latin words sum up the moral history of every man and woman who has ever lived.

*Video meliora, proboque;*
*Deteriora sequor.*

'I see the better and approve it; the worse is what I pursue.' Hell is paved, not only with good intentions, but also with the most exquisite sensibilities, the noblest expressions of fine feeling, the profoundest insights into ethical truths. We know and we feel; but knowledge and feeling are not able, in a great many cases, to affect the sources of our will. For the sources of the will lie below the level of consciousness in a mental region where intellect and feeling are largely inoperative. Whatever else they may be—and many theological and psychological theories have been elaborated in order to explain their nature and their mode of action—religious rites, prayer, and meditation are devices for affecting the sources of the will. It is a matter of empirical experience that regular meditation on, say, courage or peace often helps the meditator to be brave and serene. Prayer for moral strength and tenacity of purpose is in fact quite often answered. Those who, to express in symbolic action their attachment to a cause, take part in impressive ceremonies and rites, frequently come away strengthened in their power to resist temptations and make sacrifices for the cause. There is good evidence that the practice of some kind of spiritual exercise in common is extremely helpful to those who undertake it. Groups whose members are believing Christians will naturally adopt Christian forms of devotion. To those who are not affiliated to any Christian church we would tentatively recommend some form of group meditation on such subjects as peace, man's unity, the spiritual reality underlying all phenomena and the virtues which Constructive Pacifists should exhibit in their daily lives. Meditation is a psychological technique whose efficacy does not depend on previous theological belief. It can be successfully practised by any one who is prepared to take the necessary trouble. It is an exercise of the soul, just as running or jumping are exercises of the body. Constructive Pacifists are athletes in training for an event of much more than Olympic importance. They will be wise to use all the exercises that their predecessors in the endless struggle for the embodiment of goodness upon the earth have tested out and found to be useful.

# POEMS

## SYMPATHY

THE irony of being two . . .!
Grey eyes, wide open suddenly,
Regard me and inquire; I see a face
Grave and unquiet in tenderness.
Heart-rending question of women—never answered:
'Tell me, tell me, what are you thinking of?'
Oh, the pain and foolishness of love!
What can I do but make my old grimace,
Ending it with a kiss, as I always do?

## FIRST PHILOSOPHER'S SONG

A POOR degenerate from the ape,
  Whose hands are four, whose tail 's a limb,
I contemplate my flaccid shape
  And know I may not rival him,

Save with my mind—a nimbler beast
  Possessing a thousand sinewy tails,
A thousand hands, with which it scales,
  Greedy of luscious truth, the greased

Poles and the coco-palms of thought,
  Threds easily through the mangrove maze
Of metaphysics, walks the taut
  Frail dangerous liana ways

That link across wide gulfs remote
  Analogies between tree and tree;
Outruns the hare, outhops the goat;
  Mind fabulous, mind sublime and free!

But oh, the sound of simian mirth!
  Mind, issued from the monkey's womb,
Is still umbilical to earth,
  Earth its home and earth its tomb.

## FIFTH PHILOSOPHER'S SONG

A MILLION million spermatozoa,
  All of them alive:
Out of their cataclysm but one poor Noah
  Dare hope to survive.

And among that billion minus one
  Might have chanced to be
Shakespeare, another Newton, a new Donne—
  But the One was Me.

Shame to have ousted your betters thus,
  Taking ark while the others remained outside!
Better for all of us, froward Homunculus,
  If you 'd quietly died!

## MORNING SCENE

LIGHT through the latticed blind
Spans the dim intermediate space
With parallels of luminous dust
To gild a nuptial couch, where Goya's mind
Conceived those agonizing hands, that hair
Scattered, and half a sunlit bosom bare,
And, imminently above them, a red face
Fixed in the imbecile earnestness of lust.

## THEATRE OF VARIETIES

CIRCLE on circle the hanging gardens descend,
Sloping from upper darkness, each flower face
Open, turned to the light and laughter and life
Of the sun-like stage. And all the space between,
Like the hot fringes of a summer sky,
Is quick with trumpets, beats with the pulse of drums,
Athwart whose sultry thunders rise and fall

Flute fountains and the swallow flight of strings.
Music, the revelation and marvellous lie!
On the bright trestles tumblers, tamers of beasts,
Dancers and clowns affirm their fury of life.

'The World-Renowned Van Hogen Mogen in
The Master Mystery of Modern Times.'

He talks, he talks; more powerfully than even
Music his quick words hammer on men's minds.
'Observe this hat, ladies and gentlemen;
Empty, observe, empty as the universe
Before the Head for which this Hat is made
Was or could think. Empty, observe, observe.'
The rabbit kicks; a bunch of paper flowers
Blooms in the limelight; paper tape unrolls,
Endless, a clue. 'Ladies and gentlemen . . .'
Sharp, sharp on malleable minds his words
Hammer. The little Indian boy
Enters the basket. Bright, an Ethiop's sword
Transfixes it and bleeding is withdrawn.
Death draws and petrifies the watching faces.
'Ladies and gentlemen': the great Van Hogen Mogen
Smiles and is kind. A puddle of dark blood
Slowly expands. 'The irremediable
Has been and is no more.'
Empty of all but blood, the basket gapes.
'Arise!' he calls, and blows his horn. 'Arise!'
And bird-like from the highest gallery
The little Indian answers.
Shout upon shout, the hanging gardens reverberate.
Happy because the irremediable is healed,
Happy because they have seen the impossible,
Because they are freed from the dull daily law,
They shout, they shout. And great Van Hogen Mogen
Modestly bows, graciously smiles. The band
Confirms the lie with cymbals and bassoons,
The curtain falls. How quickly the walls recede,
How soon the petrified gargoyles re-become
Women and men! who fill the warm thick air
With rumour of their loves and discontents,
Not suffering even great Hogen Mogen—
Only begetter out of empty hats

Of rose and rabbit, raiser from the dead—
To invade the sanctity of private life.

The Six Aerial Sisters Polpetini
Dive dangerously from trapeze to far
Trapeze, like stars, and know not how to fall.
For if they did and if, of his silver balls,
Sclopis, the juggler, dropped but one—but one
Of all the flying atoms which he builds
With his quick throwing into a solid arch—
What panic then would shake the pale flower faces
Blooming so tranquilly in their hanging beds!
What a cold blast of fear! But patrons must not,
And since they must not, cannot be alarmed.
Hence Sclopis, hence (the proof is manifest)
The Six Aerial Ones infallibly
Function, and have done, and for ever will.

Professor Chubb's Automaton performs
Upon the viols and virginals, plays chess,
Ombre and loo, mistigri, tric-trac, pushpin,
Sings Lilliburlero in falsetto, answers
All questions put to it, and with its rubber feet
Noiselessly dances the antique heydiguy.
'Is it a man?' the terrible infant wonders.
And 'no,' they say, whose business it is
To say such infants nay. And 'no' again
They shout when, after watching Dobbs and Debs
Step simultaneously through intricate dances,
Hammer the same tune with their rattling clogs
In faultless unison, the infant asks,
'And they, are they machines?'
Music, the revelation and marvellous lie,
Rebuilds in the minds of all a suave and curving
Kingdom of Heaven, where the saxophone
Affirms everlasting loves, the drums deny
Death, and where great Tenorio, when he sings,
Makes Picardy bloom only with perfumed roses,
And never a rotting corpse in all its earth.
Play, music, play! In God's bright limelight eyes
An angel walks and with one rolling glance
Blesses each hungry flower in the hanging gardens.
'Divine,' they cry, having no words by which

To call the nameless spade a spade, 'Divine
Zenocrate!' There are dark mysteries
Whose name is beauty, strange revelations called
Love, and a gulph of pleasure and of awe
Where words fall vain and wingless in the dark;
The seen Ineffable, the felt but all-Unknown
And Undescribed, is God. 'Divine, divine!'
The god-intoxicated shout goes up.
'Divine Zenocrate!'
'Father,' the terrible infant's voice is shrill,
'Say, father, why does the lady wear no skirts?'
She wears no skirts; God's eyes have never been brighter.
The face flowers open in her emanation.
She is the suave and curving Kingdom of Heaven
Made visible, and in her sugared song
The ear finds paradise. Divine, divine!
Her belly is like a mound of wheat, her breasts
Are towers, her hair like a flock of goats.
  Her foot is feat with diamond toes
  And she—divine Zenocrate—
  And she on legs of ruby goes.
The face flowers tremble in the rushing wind
Of her loud singing. A poet in the pit
Jots down in tears the words of her Siren song.
  So every spirit as it is most pure,
  And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
  So it the rarer body doth procure
  To habit in, and is more fairly dight
  With cheerful grace and amiable sight:
  For of the soul the body form doth take;
  And soul is form and doth the body make.
'Now, boys, together. All with me,' she cries
Through the long sweet suspense of dominant chords;
'For of the soul,' her voice is paradise,
'For of the soul the body form doth take;
And soul is form and doth the body make.'
Zenocrate, alone, alone divine!

God save the King. Music's last practical joke
Still bugling in their ears of war and glory,
The folk emerge into the night.
Already next week's bills are being posted:—
Urim and Thummim, cross-talk comedians;

Ringpok, the Magian of Tibet;
The Two Bedelias; Ruby and Truby Dix;
Sam Foy and Troupe of Serio-Comic Cyclists . . .
Theatre of immemorial varieties,
Old mummery, but mummers never the same!
Twice nightly every night from now till doomsday
The hanging gardens, bedded with pale flower faces,
Young flowers in the old old gardens, will echo
With ever new, with ever new delight.

## PICTURE BY GOYA

### A Highway Robbery

It is a scene of murder—elegant, is it not?
You lutanists, who play to naked Queens,
As summer sleep or music under trees,
As luncheon on the grass—the grass on which
The country copulatives make sport, the pale
Grass with the tall tubed hats, the inky coats
And rosy, rosy among the funeral black
(*Memento Vivere*) a naked girl.
But here the sleepers bleed, the tumbling couples
Struggle, but not in love; the naked girl
Kneels at the feet of one who hesitates,
Voluptuously, between a rape and a murder.

Bandits angelical and you, rich corpses!
Truth is your sister, Goodness your spouse.
Towering skies lean down and tall, tall trees
Impose their pale arsenical benediction,
Making all seem exquisitely remote
And small and silent, like a village fair
Seen from the hill-top, far far below.
And yet they walk on the village green to whom
The fair is huge, tumultuous, formidable. Earth
Lies unremembered beneath the feet of dancers
Who, looking up, see not the sky, but towers
And bright invading domes and the fierce swings,
Scythe-like, reaping and ravaging the quiet.

And when night falls, the shuddering gas-flares scoop
Out of the topless dark a little vault
Of smoky gold, wherein the dancers still
Jig away, gods of a home-made universe.

## SEASONS

Blood of the world, time stanchless flows;
The wound is mortal and is mine.
I act, but not to my design,
Choose, but 'twas ever fate that chose,
Would flee, but there are doors that close.
Winter has set its muddy sign
Without me and within. The rose
Dies also in my heart and no stars shine.

But nightingales call back the sun;
The doors are down and I can run,
Can laugh, for destiny is dead.
All springs are hoarded in the flowers;
Quick flow the intoxicating hours,
For wine as well as blood is red.

## TIDE

And if the tide should be for ever low,
The silted channels turned to ooze and mire?
And this grey delta—if it still should grow,
Bank after bank, and still the sea retire?
Retire beyond the halcyon hopes of noon
And silver night, the threat of wind and wave,
Past all the dark compulsion of the moon,
Past resurrection, past her power to save?
There is a firm consenting to disaster,
Proud resignation to accepted pain.
Pain quickens him who makes himself its master,
And quickening battle crowns both loss and gain.
But to this silting of the soul, who gives
Consent is no more man, no longer lives.

## MIDSUMMER DAY

This day was midsummer, the longest tarrying
Time makes between two sleeps. What have I done
With this longest of so few days, how spent,
Dear God, the golden, golden gift of sun?
Virginal, when I rose, the morning lay
Ready for beauty's rape, for wisdom's marrying.
I wrote: only an inky spider went,
Smear after smear, across the unsullied day.
If there were other places, if there were
But other days than this longest of few;
If one had courage, did one dare to do
That which alone might kill what now defaces
This the one place of all the countless places,
This only day when one will never dare!

## CARPE NOCTEM

There is no future, there is no more past,
No roots nor fruits, but momentary flowers,
Lie still, only lie still and night will last,
Silent and dark, not for a space of hours,
But everlastingly. Let me forget
All but your perfume, every night but this,
The shame, the fruitless weeping, the regret.
Only lie still: this faint and quiet bliss
Shall flower upon the brink of sleep and spread,
Till there is nothing else but you and I
Clasped in a timeless silence. But like one
Who, doomed to die, at morning will be dead,
I know, though night seem dateless, that the sky
Must brighten soon before to-morrow's sun.

# THE CICADAS

SIGHTLESS, I breathe and touch; this night of pines
Is needly, resinous and rough with bark.
Through every crevice in the tangible dark
The moonlessness above it all but shines.

Limp hangs the leafy sky; never a breeze
Stirs, nor a foot in all this sleeping ground;
And there is silence underneath the trees—
The living silence of continuous sound.

For like inveterate remorse, like shrill
Delirium throbbing in the fevered brain,
An unseen people of cicadas fill
Night with their one harsh note, again, again.

Again, again, with what insensate zest!
What fury of persistence, hour by hour!
Filled with what devil that denies them rest,
Drunk with what source of pleasure and of power!

Life is their madness, life that all night long
Bids them to sing and sing, they know not why;
Mad cause and senseless burden of their song;
For life commands, and Life! is all their cry.

I hear them sing, who in the double night
Of clouds and branches fancied that I went
Through my own spirit's dark discouragement,
Deprived of inward as of outward sight:

Who, seeking, even as here in the wild wood,
A lamp to beckon through my tangled fate,
Found only darkness and, disconsolate,
Mourned the lost purpose and the vanished good.

Now in my empty heart the crickets' shout
Re-echoing denies and still denies
With stubborn folly all my learned doubt,
In madness more than I in reason wise.

Life, life! The word is magical. They sing,
And in my darkened soul the great sun shines;
My fancy blossoms with remembered spring,
And all my autumns ripen on the vines.

Life! and each knuckle of the fig-tree's pale
Dead skeleton breaks out with emerald fire.
Life! and the tulips blow, the nightingale
Calls back the rose, calls back the old desire:

And old desire that is for ever new,
Desire, life's earliest and latest birth,
Life's instrument to suffer and to do,
Springs with the roses from the teeming earth;

Desire that from the world's bright body strips
Deforming time and makes each kiss the first;
That gives to hearts, to satiated lips
The endless bounty of to-morrow's thirst.

Time passes, and the watery moonrise peers
Between the tree-trunks. But no outer light
Tempers the chances of our groping years,
No moon beyond our labyrinthine night.

Clueless we go; but I have heard thy voice,
Divine Unreason! harping in the leaves,
And grieve no more; for wisdom never grieves,
And thou hast taught me wisdom; I rejoice.

*The first four poems here printed were first published in* LEDA (1920). *The others are*